LIFE AND TIMES

OF

HENRY GRATTAN.

VOL. IV.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF THE

RT. HON. HENRY GRATTAN.

BY HIS SON,

HENRY GRATTAN, ESQ., M.P.

NEW EDITION,

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

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GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
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LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

HENRY GRATTAN.

CHAPTER I.

The rights of the City of Dublin invaded—Conduct of the Lord Chancellor on Mr. Curran's speech before the Privy Council—Adverse decision—Indignation of the people—Proceedings of the Whig Club, and their vindication in reply to the Chancellor's attack—Meeting of the citizens of Dublin—Their resolutions—Letters of Mr. Grattan to Mr. M'Can, Mr. Day, and the Rev. Edward Berwick—Mr. Foster chosen Speaker of the new parliament—Responsibility Bill—Mr Grattan's letter to Mr. Day on that subject.

Not satisfied with his successful proceedings against the opposition, the Chancellor (Lord Clare), now sought to quell the popular spirit that prevailed in the metropolis, and he involved the Government in a squabble with the city. Alderman James had been appointed Commissioner of the Police; he set up as candidate for the office of Lord Mayor, under the patronage of the Government, and was chosen by the Aldermen, but rejected by the Commons,* who selected Alderman Howison, a popular individual. In such a case, the custom was, that the Aldermen should send down the name of another candidate. This they declined to do, and insisted that Alder-

* These bodies sat apart, the board of aldermen resembled the Upper House, the sheriffs and common councilmen the Lower; a fair representation for the city, had they not been corrupted and prejudiced by the castle.

man James was elected. The approbation of the Privy Council being necessary to confirm the election of the Lord Mayor, both parties appealed to that body on behalf of their respective candidates. The case was argued before them, Doctor Duigenan defending Alderman James, and George Ponsonby, and Mr. Curran, Alderman Howison. The result was that the council sent the parties to a new election.

It was on this occasion, that Mr. Curran made a splendid speech, in which he alluded to Lord Clare, and portrayed his character in colours which could not be mistaken, and the brilliancy of which will never fade. His description of Ireland was spirited and patriotic; his description of Lord Clare was just, eloquent and severe, and conveyed the most caustic satire in the most polished style, — which latter quality is not always to be found in Curran's speaking. But a long metaphorical invective was not perhaps the best mode of encountering Lord Clare. Curran had beforehand mentioned that he meant to attack him; so that he was immediately stopped: for though the Lord-lieutenant (who is the head of that court) was present, yet Lord Clare assumed the right to direct, and accordingly he cleared the chamber. This, however, did not prevent the publication of the speech and the invective. But if Curran had pressed very hard on the legal opinion of the Chancellor, which in point of law was quite wrong, and had delivered some very hard sentences before he could have been stopped, he would have borne him down, and his success would have been more complete. Curran, however, did neither.

The Chancellor never forgave this attack; the picture was too like; there was no mistaking it, and in consequence he fatally revenged himself

upon Curran; for the speech cost him his chief practice at the bar. The judge set himself so sternly against the advocate, that he deprived him of almost all his business in chancery, and may be said to have driven him from his court. Even here, however, Curran could have gained the advantage, if he had read; for Lord Clare knew nothing profoundly. But Curran was not master of the business of the court, and wanted application.

The following extracts from this celebrated speech may be considered somewhat copious; but they merit attention from the consequences they produced, and which afford a melancholy spectacle; how effectually, how cruelly, and how irresponsibly, tyranny could be exercised in Ireland, even in a Court of Justice.

Speaking of the law that regulated the Corporation, and which Mr. Grattan's father had brought in,—Mr. Curran observed—

"At the time of this statute, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen exercised the exclusive power of election to the chief magistracy without any interference of the Commons. The immediate mischief of such a Constitution, with respect to the metropolis itself, I have touched on before. The people were borne down, the magistracy depraved, the law was relaxed, and public tranquillity was at an end. These mischiefs were more than enough to induce the citizens of Dublin to call loudly, as they did, upon the justice of the legislature for Parliamentary redress. But the wisdom of that legislature formed an estimate of the mischief from considerations that probably did not enter into the minds of the contending parties; namely, from the then state of Ireland as an individual, and as a connected country; as as an individual depressed in every thing essential to the support of political or civil independency,—depressed in common, in opulence, and in knowledge; distracted by that civil and religious discord suggested by ignorance and bigotry, and inflamed by the artifice of a cruel policy, which divided in order to destroy; conscious that liberty could be banished only by disunion, and that a generous

nation could not be completely stripped of her rights until one part of the people was deluded into the foolish and wicked idea that its freedom and consequence could be preserved, or supported only by the slavery or depression of the other:—in such a country it was peculiarly necessary to establish at least some few incorporated bodies, which might serve as great repositories of popular strength. Our ancestors learned from Great Britain to understand their use and their importance; in that country they had been hoarded up with the wisest forecast, and preserved with a religious reverence, as an unfailing resource against those times of storm, in which it is the will of Providence that all human affairs should sometimes fluctuate; and as such they had been found at once a protection to the people, and a security to the Crown. My lords, it is by the salutary repulsion of popular privilege, that the power of the monarchy is supported in its sphere: withdraw that support, and it falls in ruin upon the people,—but it falls in a ruin no less fatal to itself, by which it is shivered in pieces.

"Our ancestors must therefore have been sensible that the enslaved state of the corporation of the metropolis, was a mischief that extended its effects to the remotest borders of the island. In the confederated strength and the united councils of great cities, the freedom of the country may find a safeguard, which extends itself even to the remote inhabitant who never put his foot within their gates.

"But, my lords, how much these considerations have been enforced by a view of Ireland, as a connected country, deprived as it was of almost all the advantages of an hereditary monarch: the father of his people, residing at a distance, and the paternal beam reflected upon his children through such a variety of *mediums*, sometimes too languidly to warm them, sometimes so intensely as to consume; a succession of governors differing from one another in their tempers, in their talents, and in their virtues, and, of course, in their systems of administration; unprepared in general for rule by any previous institution, and utterly unacquainted with the people they were to govern, and with the men through whose agency they were to act.

"Sometimes, my lords, it is true, a rare individual* has appeared among us, as if sent by the bounty of Providence, in compassion to human miseries, marked by that dignified simplicity of manly character, which is the mingled

* Mr. Grattan.

result of an enlightened understanding, and an elevated integrity,—commanding a respect that he laboured not to inspire, and attracting a confidence which it was impossible he could betray. It is but eight years, my lords, since we have seen such a man amongst us, raising a degraded country from the condition of a province, to the rank and consequence of a people worthy to be the ally of a mighty empire, forming the league that bound her to Great Britain, on the firm and honourable basis of equal liberty and a common fate, — 'standing and falling with the British Empire;' and thus stipulating for that freedom which alone contains the principle of her political life in the covenant of her federal connexion.

"But how short is the continuance of these auspicious gleams of public sunshine! — how soon are they passed, and perhaps for ever! In what rapid and fatal revolution has Ireland seen the talents and the virtues of such men give place to a succession of sordid parade and empty pretension, — of bloated promise and lank performance, — of austere hypocrisy and peculating economy. Hence it is, my lords, that the administration of Ireland so often presents to the reader of her history, not the view of a legitimate government, but rather of an encampment in the country of a barbarous enemy; where the object of the invader is not government, but conquest; where he is of course obliged to resort to the corrupting of clans, or of single individuals pointed out to his notice by public abhorrence, and recommended to his confidence only by a treachery so rank and consummate, as precludes all possibility of their return to private virtue or to public reliance, and therefore only put into authority over a wretched country, condemned to the torture of all that petulant, unfeeling asperity with which a narrow and malignant mind will bristle in unmerited elevation,—condemned to be betrayed, and disgraced, and exhausted by the little traitors that have been suffered to nestle and to grow within it, making it at once the source of their grandeur and the victim of their vices, reducing it to the melancholy necessity of supporting their consequence, and of sinking under their crimes, like the lion perishing by the poison of a reptile that finds shelter in the mane of the noble animal while it is stinging him to death.

"But to what end offer argument to such men? A little and a peevish mind may be exasperated, but how shall it

be corrected by refutation? How fruitless would it have been to represent to that wretched Chancellor that he was betraying those rights which he was sworn to maintain,* and that he was involving a Government in disgrace and a kingdom in panic and consternation; that he was violating every sacred duty and every solemn engagement that bound him to himself, his country, his sovereign, and his God! Alas! my lords, by what argument could any man hope to reclaim or to dissuade a mean, illiberal, and unprincipled minion of authority, induced by his profligacy to undertake, and bound by his avarice and vanity to persevere. He would probably have replied to the most unanswerable arguments by *some curt, contumelious, and unmeaning apothegm, delivered with the fretful smile of irritated self-sufficiency and disconcerted arrogance; or even if he could be dragged by his fears to a consideration of the question, by what miracle could the pigmy capacity of a stunted pedant be enlarged to a reception of the subject?* The endeavour to approach it would have only removed him to a greater distance than he was before: as a little hand that strives to grasp a mighty globe is thrown back by the reaction of its own effort to comprehend. It may be given to an Hale or an Hardwick to discover and retract a mistake; the errors of such men are only specks that arise for a moment upon the surface of a splendid luminary; consumed by its heat, or irradiated by its light, they soon purge and disappear. But the perverseness of a mean and narrow intellect are like the excrescences that grow upon a body naturally cold and dark: no fire to waste them, and no ray to enlighten, they assimilate and coalesce with those qualities so congenial to their nature, and acquire an incorrigible permanency in the Union with kindred frost and kindred opacity. Nor indeed, my lords, except where the interest of millions can be affected by the folly or the vice of an individual, need it be much regretted that to things not worthy of being made better it hath not pleased Providence to afford the privilege of improvement."

Lord Chancellor.—"Surely, Mr. Curran, a gentleman of your eminence in your profession must see that the conduct of former privy councils has nothing to do with the question before us. The question lies in the narrowest compass; it is merely whether the Commons have a right of

* Sir Constantine Phipps, whose conduct became the subject of much complaint.

arbitrary and capricious rejection, or are obliged to assign a reasonable cause for their disapprobation. To that point you have a right to be heard; but I hope you do not mean to lecture the council."

Mr. Curran.—"I mean, my lords, to speak to the case of my clients, and to avail myself of every topic of defence which I conceive applicable to the case. I am not speaking to a dry point of law, to a single judge, and on a mere forensic subject; I am addressing a very large auditory, consisting of co-ordinate members, of whom the far greater number are not versed in law. Were I to address such an audience on the interests and rights of a great city, and address them in the hackneyed style of a pleader, I should make a very idle display of profession, with very little information to those I address, or benefit to those on whose behalf I have the honour to be heard. I am aware, my lords, that truth is to be sought only by slow and painful progress; I know also that error is in its nature flippant and compendious; it hops with airy and fastidious levity over proofs and arguments, and perches upon assertion, which it calls conclusion."*

The Chancellor, notwithstanding the able arguments of counsel, decided in favour of Alderman James, declaring "that the case must come before the King's Bench, and by the time that the Commons *had amused themselves there for three or four years, it was probable they would be tired of it*, and wish themselves out of the dispute." Such was the solemnity of his judicial decisions.

The conduct of the Chancellor and Privy Council met with general disapprobation. Several of the minor corporations, the volunteer corps, and public meetings of the inhabitants upheld the rights of their fellow citizens, and condemned the decision of the Privy Council. The sheriffs and commons of the corporation assembled, and resolved that the Privy Council were wrong in their decision; that Alderman James was not legally elected Lord Mayor; and they adopted

* A just representation of the Chancellor.

the sovereign remedy in all such cases—that of stopping the supplies, and voted that they would not pay the Government Lord Mayor any money, or allow any in his accounts; and that he must deliver up to them the Mansion-house and the corporation property.

An address was then voted to his Majesty, complaining of Lord Westmoreland and Lord Clare; and thanks were returned to Mr. Curran and Mr. Ponsonby for their exertions in the Privy Council in favour of the rights of the people. The Whig Club also proceeded to pass the following resolution:—

Dublin, July 19th, 1790.

At a meeting of the Whig Club, held this day, his Grace the Duke of Leinster in the chair, the following resolution was proposed by the Right Hon. the Earl of Charlemont, and seconded by the Right Hon. the Earl of Moira, viz.:—

"That the Whig Club cannot possibly have witnessed what has lately passed respecting the election of a Lord Mayor, without expressing the deepest concern, and declaring that they will, both individually, and as a body, co-operate with their fellow citizens in every legal and constitutional measure, which may tend to vindicate the laws, and to support the rights of this metropolis."

Which resolution being put, the same was passed unanimously, and ordered to be entered on their books, and published.

(Signed) HENRY GRATTAN, Pro. Sec.

This resolution roused the ire of the Chancellor, and on the 24th of July, 1790, before the Lord Lieutenant came to the House to prorogue the Parliament, he attacked the Whig Club in very severe terms; and said that he was ready to justify his conduct on that occasion. He was replied to by Lord Moira and Lord Charlemont, who avowed the resolutions, which they said they were ready to support.

The speech of the Chancellor which contained

the attack having been published, the Whig Club found it necessary to defend their principles. The vindication is strong and able, perhaps too personal; but it was not on that account the less liked. The party had been hardly treated and greatly abused, and being attacked, it was not possible for the Club to yield; it was absolutely necessary they should defend themselves, otherwise they would have sunk in the country. This reply enabled them to rise and triumph. It was printed in pamphlets, and had a rapid circulation. Undoubtedly the Whig Club went very far. It was a political assembly openly watching and superintending the measures of Government,—a very formidable body to be permitted in any state. The manner, however, in which the Chancellor chose to attack it was neither Parliamentary nor Constitutional. The following was their reply:—

Monday, 2nd Aug. 1790.

At a meeting held this day the Whig Club resolved itself into the following committee:—

Duke of Leinster,	Mr. Grattan,
Earl of Moira,	Mr. Curran,
Earl of Charlemont,	Sir Edward Newenham,
Earl of Arran,	Mr. Egan,
Mr. Ponsonby,	Mr. Hamilton Rowan.

The Duke of Leinster reported the resolution of the committee, which was accordingly read and unanimously agreed to, and is as follows:—

That we have seen a publication containing various and extraordinary charges against the members of this society, comparing them to those of "porter clubs, and such like low and riotous meetings;" and further alleging "that they are persons of the grossest ignorance; that they have shown that ignorance particularly in their late resolution on behalf of the rights of the subject, and that they have discovered, on this occasion, as great a perversion of sense as ever distracted the human brain."*

That we should have passed by such a publication as

* The Chancellor's speech.

one of those flippant productions, which the present ministers of the Crown, by their writers, vilify the people, if said empty paper did not affect to call itself the speech of the Chancellor. That we could wish the composition had confined itself to us, and had not spread its foul contents among the Common Council of Dublin, and the citizens in general, on behalf of their privileges legally assembled. We are sorry to have given any one an occasion to aggravate their present situation, and to overwhelm with a torrent of abuse, men already struggling under great wrong.

We cannot avoid expressing our disapprobation of such a malapert way of addressing the people, a disregard for whom, under any Government, is unwise,—under a free Government, graceless,—and in a minister, disqualification to hold the reins of power. We have not forgotten the gross language once before offered to the people—it was when they defended their country against the famous propositions. We flattered ourselves that we should never again be witness to the like froward discourse. The citizens, however, will bear with patience an evil it seems they only share in common with the rest of their fellow subjects: as for ourselves, observations falling from no superior height of public virtue, make no impression.

The author of the publication asserts, that the act of council to which our resolution of the former meeting refers, was strictly legal; but it is not in a free country that the assertion of any one man can decide. Had assertion been sufficient, there was not wanting prompt and flippant assertion against all your exertions. You had the assertion of great law officers against your declaration of right—you had their assertion in favour of the famous propositions—and you had their assertion that the King legislated in Ireland, as King of Great Britain, and that the British Parliament could make, for certain purposes, a statute Regent for Ireland, and that a Regent so made, could supersede the one appointed by your own Parliament. This nation paid but little regard to such assertions; and whatever she has acquired in constitution and consideration, is due to her wisdom in holding such assertions, and the assertions thereof, as men fallible and suspicious.

The author of the paper is made to declare, that the rejecting of Alderman Howison, and the approving Alderman James, was a necessary act of public duty. Here we

are concerned to be obliged directly to contradict the author. It was not a necessary act of public duty, it was not necessary, however proper at that particular time, to approve of either, for the parties might have been sent back to a new election; but if approbation of either was unavoidable, it was not necessary to give the preference in favour of Alderman James, who could not serve, and to reject Alderman Howison, who was legally elected.

To prove the truth of this part of the speech, three things are indispensable, none of which are fact:—1st, That the parties could not have been sent back to a new election; 2nd, That the Council could not by law approve of Alderman Howison. 3d, That they could not by law refuse Alderman James.

On the first great part of the defence, we must then observe, that it is not founded in fact; that it advances the plea of necessity, which notoriously did not exist, and that the resorting to such a plea, bespeaks in the author, a secret conviction, that such a proceeding can be excused by nothing else but the plea of necessity. From a misrepresentation of the fact, in the outset of the defence, the author of the speech proceeds to promise, that he will prove his point to the conviction of mankind—the most unlettered man. But first, he stops to reflect on the peers; and the author of the speech condemns two noble lords,* for expressing their sentiments on a point of right, which may afterwards come before them as judges. Their lordships, however, if they wished to shelter themselves under authority, have it, and on this very point, in the person of the Lord Chancellor, who did declare in the presence of the parties and the public, his law opinion very early on this very question, of which opinion the public were, by himself and his friends, fully possessed, and the public is much deceived, if his early and erroneous opinion on this subject has not been the principal cause of the disgrace of the Government and the ferment of the city. The noble lords will not, however, shelter themselves under his authority; they conceive that however improper to declare an early opinion in case of private property, yet where privileges are violated, where corporate rights are attacked, it is not unbecoming the peers of the realm to take an early part, and to consider themselves not merely as hereditary judges, but (what they value more infinitely) as hereditary free-

* Lord Moira and Lord Charlemont.

men—bound by interest—bound by affection—and now, by the offences of his Majesty's ministers and their contumely, bound more than ever to make common cause with their countrymen; they should have thought they betrayed the liberties of their country, if they had waited for three years,* the term idly prescribed to the citizens to amuse themselves in the courts of justice; and we say for ourselves, without presuming to dictate to others, that whenever the ministers of the Crown shall, as in the present case, attack the rights of the people, we shall always be forthcoming—uniting with our fellow subjects in common defence and common danger.

The author of the speech proceeds to give the public, on the present question, historic information, and informs us, that the right of electing the Lord Mayor was vested, by bye-laws, in the board of Aldermen solely. We know it; and we further know, and from this admission are instructed to collect, that the Commons were, by force of those bye-laws, ousted of that share in the election of the Lord Mayor which they had before under charters; and it is an addition to the case of the Commons, that they now desire nothing but what they have already, by express Act of Parliament, and until ousted, as is now confessed, by force of bye-laws, had originally by charter.

The author of the speech informs us, that it was by the new rules,† the Lord Lieutenant and Council got the right of approbation, but he adds, that they got no judicial power; however, we cannot forget on a late occasion, that they displayed some things much resembling the exercise of a judicial power, when the Chancellor limited the lawyers to speak to the abstract point of law, and when the books of the corporation were sent for and examined, and the corporators interrogated, touching their tests and engagements; however, it is not for us to reconcile this parade and judicial authority, with the opinion of the author of the speech denying the Council any judicial power; it is sufficient to say, that the observation has nothing to do with the question. The question not being whether the Lord Lieutenant and Council have given an erroneous judgment, but whether they have not committed an arbitrary and illegal act.

The author of the speech now approaches the point,

* Expressions of the Chancellor in giving his decision.

† Passed in the time of Charles II.

and states, that the Council has not only no judicial power, but no power to judge of the legality of the election. Here again we find it impossible to reconcile the opinion of the author with the proceedings of the Council; for the Council, and the Chancellor in particular, as a member of that Council, did examine publicly, and in the presence of the parties, into the merits of the election, and the conduct of the ballot, and limited the lawyers to the abstract point of law, and interrogated the common councilmen, and explored the books and minutes of the corporations and common council, and inquired into the tests taken by the different corporations, or said to be taken against electing of police magistrates; all which was, as we conceive, inquiring into facts, and an insistance on matter which could relate to nothing but the legality of the election, of which the author now asserts the Council had no authority to judge.

The author of the speech proceeds, and explains what power the Council have, and states it to be a power to approve of the man who has, *prima facie*, the best title. Now the only title any man can have is legal election, and the only way of judging who has, *prima facie*, the best title, is to exercise some degree of judgment on the legality of his election; unless the author of the speech would say that the Lord Lieutenant and Council had decided that Alderman James had the best *prima facie* title, without exercising in fact any judgment whatever on the subject. Thus does the author stand in flat contradiction to himself, and thus does he impeach all those proceedings which he affects to defend. We might well agree with the author, that the council have only a power to return who, *prima facie*, has the best title; we might add, they are obliged so to do; and we complain that they rejected that Alderman, who, *prima facie*, was elected, and approved of that Alderman, who, *prima facie*, was rejected, and decided not only against the right, but the colourable title, in favour of the man who had neither.

We have not forgotten, that the Chancellor declared, to the lawyers, "'tis true, on a superficial reading of the Act of Parliament, the words will bear out the construction of the Commons."

The author proceeds, and explains still further the powers of the council, and says that the council is confined to a single object, and professing to exemplify a single

object, he states two. The first he states is disaffection; the other personal disability. Personal disability is legal incapacity—disaffection a wicked perversion of mind—good cause for a complete exclusion from office, but which can work no legal incapacity, until brought into action. Thus the author either confounds legal disability with disaffection, or he asserts, that the Lord Lieutenant and Council have a power to inquire into the question of legal disability, which relates merely to those merits, and that right, that the same author has just alleged belonged exclusively to another judicature,—the courts of law.

The author has stated, that the council derive their power under the new rules,—and the new rules are conceived in the words of the 33d of Geo. II. under which the common council derives its power. The author states disaffection to be the single object for the inquiry of the Privy Council; it remained for him to prove disaffection to be merely a law question, of corporate incapacity, or to allow that the common council was not confined to that law question, by the Act of Parliament; and so give up the opinion advanced by the Chancellor. The author seems aware of the difficulty, and he therefore enumerates two distinct objects, disaffection and legal incapacity as one and the same, committing a solecism in terms, to secure a studied confusion in sense.

The speech informs us, that in a double return, to approve of one, has always been a matter of course; here we are again sorry to be obliged directly to contradict the author of the speech; it has not been a matter of course—it has been common to approve of neither—it has been common to send back the parties to a new election—it was the case in 1763—it was the case twice this very year. But even though the author of the speech should not have been wrong, as he is, in point of fact, yet he would remain wrong in point of argument. To make out his defence, it is not sufficient to prove it a matter of course to approve of one of the parties; he must show it to be a matter of indifference which, whether the man who is legally elected, or the man who is by law disqualified; or rather, indeed, he must go farther for a precedent, and show it to be a matter of course to approve of the latter, that is, the man disqualified by law.

The author of the speech informs us, that the Council cannot decide the point of law—we acknowledge it, but

we did not want the interposition of the author to give that information. But though the author informs us there is redress at law, yet the person whose name he assumes has also informed us that "such redress would be a grievance, and that the city, after amusing itself for three years in the courts of justice, would be heartily sick of the experiment." Our respect for decency prevents us from going so far as to cast a damp and despondency on appealing to the law of the land, yet we do agree that the forcing the city to that appeal was a very great injury, because the redress might be very tedious—the interim might be very disturbed, and the period of the mayoralty expire before the point could be settled.

There is a further objection—could we suppose the courts of law capable of a criminal decision, we have a ministry disposed to give them protection.

The author of the speech would teach us to believe, that the Chief Governor and Council decided in favour of Alderman James merely to put the question in course of trial; we are to understand, then, that there was no partiality in the Administration; that the castle, or the rash advisers of the castle, have espoused no faction in the city. When once the author of the speech can prove this, he will then, and not till then, have supported his credit for the veracity of this suggestion.

The author of the speech proceeds and says, that it remained for the sagacity of the Irish Whigs, to turn a mere right of approbation into a judicial power; but we must observe, that it remained for the ingenuity and temper of the author, to discover wherein the Whigs have made that confusion; for certainly in the resolution alluded to, they have not. We insert the resolution that the public may judge.

"That the Whig Club cannot possibly have witnessed what has lately passed respecting the election of a Lord Mayor, without expressing the deepest concern, and declaring that they will, both individually, and as a body, co-operate with their fellow citizens in every legal and constitutional measure, which may tend to vindicate the laws, and to support the rights of this metropolis."

We must observe, that the principal charge of ignorance, was founded, as appears in the speech, on this, our supposed confusion, of the right of approbation with a judicial power: here is the resolution, wherein appears not one

syllable to justify the comment, and hence the public will collect two things. First, the great and manifest presumption of the author, in making in so gross a manner so unfounded a charge. Secondly, his great and unparalleled folly, and temerity, in making that resolution the charge, when by the mere republication he could be so fully, so publicly, and so shamefully convicted.

In order to account for his observation, we must suppose the author of the publication to conceive that the charge of violating the laws implies, of itself, the exercising a judicial power; but the crime of dispensing with the laws, has not been confined to great lawyers exercising judicial power—the author of the speech might have read how James II. had dispensed with the Test Act, without resorting to the exercise of judicial power, but by mere executive act; he had 'tis true, the assistance of a great judicial character, his famous Chancellor, a great lawyer, and a melancholy proof, that the most dangerous instrument in the hand of oppression, is an arbitrary man, hurried away by a criminal disregard for his fellow citizens, and armed with the little points of his profession, to pervert the science of the law, and to assail the liberties of the people.

We have observed upon and examined the principal part of this poor and positive production—that affects to call itself the speech of the Chancellor. The public will judge whether it contains that extent of genius, solidity of argument, and profundity of sense, to justify a modest man in pronouncing that he would completely, and to the most unlettered person, convince the whole community.

We must observe, that in one point the author of the speech has shown diffidence; it is the only point in which confidence had been a proof of firmness, or an evidence of innocence, viz. the point in question, whether by the Act of Parliament the common council is obliged to assign corporate incapacity as ground of rejection: on the affirmative of this depends the innocence of the order of Council; and here the author has hung back. He allows that he has examined this point as much as any that ever came before him; he had three months to investigate it. The Government has taken a decided part,—the city has been put in a ferment—the administration overwhelmed in disgrace—and now, it seems, the author will not venture to speak to the question,—and only diffidently tells us, that it did appear to him that Alderman James had the best

colour of election;—that from what he has heard hitherto, James has the best claim, without venturing to assign a single reason for such an opinion, or advancing one syllable in support of that novel construction which he must feel has involved us in such a train of consequences. We leave it to the public to decide whether this reserve in the author proceeds from moderation or defect.

We do not think it necessary now to go at large into the argument; but as, from the speech under our consideration, no trace whatever of the merits of the question appears, we think it proper to state from the Act of the 33rd of Geo. II. the following obvious inferences:—That by the Act no man can be mayor of the city who is rejected by the Commons; that the right of rejection in the Commons is co-extensive with the right of election in the board, both being limited by one and the some proviso, which only requires that the board shall elect, and the Commons approve of some one of the board,—and subject to that proviso leaves both equally free; that there is not in the whole Act one single syllable requiring the Commons to assign corporate incapacities, the ground of rejection;—that the ballot clause makes such an assignment of reasons impracticable, and illegal; that such assignment is a new requisite, created by construction, to impose a forfeiture of the benefit of the act, contrary to the principles of criminal jurisprudence; that the proceedings of the privy council, under the new rules, which are conceived in nearly the same terms as the Act of Parliament, without the strong circumstance of the ballot, are a precedent against this doctrine, for the Council does not assign corporate incapacities as a ground of rejection.

That the spirit and meaning of the Act is against it, which must be defeated by such construction, inasmuch as such a construction would take from the Commons the right of rejecting; for if they could reject no man but one who laboured under corporate incapacities, they could reject no man that was not before ineligible, and who could not be Mayor, though the Commons approved; and all the other aldermen elected by the board must be Mayors, though the Commons rejected them. There is every reason to believe that there is scarcely to be found at present one alderman that labours under a corporate incapacity; of course, under this construction, there is not one alderman whom the Commons could refuse. This construction,

therefore, for so much, makes the Act of Parliament a delusion.

We, therefore, with all due deference to legal authority, when it shall keep itself within the bounds of law and decorum, have republished our resolutions, and beg leave to add, that the act of the Council, to which we do acknowledge the Lord Chancellor, and we are sorry to see it, has put his hand, is an arbitrary act—imposing on the city, as far as it can have effect, an illegal magistrate, and depriving the common council of Dublin of a right they derive under Act of Parliament.

The author of the speech puts a question—Who most invade the laws, the Lord Lieutenant and Council, or they who appeal to the Whig Club? Since we are called upon, we answer, the Lord Lieutenant and Council. The Lord Lieutenant and Council, says the author of the speech, who send the matter to a legal decision? They do so, we allow it. They oblige the party, by an arbitrary act, to seek redress at law, as any man who commits a violence on another may be said to send the matter to a legal decision. But we never heard it pleaded as a proof of the defendant's regard for the law, that he had, by an assault on the plaintiff, sent the matter to a legal decision. This puerile interrogatory is calculated to move our scorn.

We confess we have not forced the citizens to such a tribunal, for we have not injured them; but so far from dissuading from seeking legal redress, we are ready to assist the City in demanding it.

We associated to preserve the laws and constitution against the attacks of the present administration, who invaded both, and who were pronounced to have done so by Parliament. We associated when the privileges of both Houses had been questioned. When the Minister was exhorted by his unconstitutional adviser to insult the legislature;—when the two Houses pronounced that Minister and his advisers to be arbitrary and unconstitutional men;—when a number of new places, pensions, and salaries were created, for the purpose of corrupting Parliament;—when peerages were sold for procuring money to be expended in the purchase of seats for the dependents of the Castle, in the assembly of the people;—when the liberty of the press, and the personal liberty of the subject, by holding him to arbitrary and excessive bail, were attacked;—when we had a Minister ready to screen such attack

from Parliamentary inquiry;—when a Place Bill, a Pension Bill, and every other constitutional bill made necessary by the corruption of the present Ministers, were rejected by their influence:—when these things took place, we assembled—we assembled when the nation was told (by authority) that in order to defeat the opposition of the aristocracy in Parliament, the Minister had, in the Government of the Marquis of Townshend, expended half a million, and that in order to defeat the present aristocracy, must expend another half-million, which was to inform us, that the nation had been by his Majesty's Ministers bought and sold, and must be bought and sold again.

We appeal to the people of England, whether, if they were informed by a great officer of state that their country had been bought and sold for half a million, and must be so again, to carry the Minister triumphantly through Parliament; whether they would not, like us, have associated in common defence: and if the people of this country, being once possessed of this alarming and dreadful secret, have gone no further than bearing their humble testimony against Ministers, it is because the people are not as rash as those Ministers, either in their conduct or declaration.

That we have been charged by the author of the speech with the crime of looking to power, we make no assertion. Instead of assertion we set forth the following measures, to which we are all pledged:—

A Place Bill, a Pension Bill, a Bill to repeal or modify the City Police Bill, a Bill to restrain the Minister from arbitrarily extending the Country Police, a Responsibility Bill, a Bill to disqualify the dependent Officers of the Revenue from voting for Members of Parliament. We are pledged to disallow the corrupt charges of the Marquis of Buckingham and his successor. We are pledged against the sale of peerages, and for the liberty of the press, and the personal liberty of the subject against arbitrary and illegal bail. We are pledged to the principles whereon the late Parliament addressed his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to take on himself the Regency, and against the assertions and principles that advanced and maintained, in the appointment of a Regent, the authority of the Parliament of another country, and would have denied to the Irish Crown its legislative power, and of course its imperial dignity. We are pledged against an Union; we are pledged against the memorable Propositions; and we are now

pledged to oppose the misconstruction or the alteration of the Act of the 33rd of Geo. II., whereby the Commons of this city have a peremptory right of rejection, which peremptory right we will support. If anything is here omitted, it will be found in our original declaration; and we have already appointed a committee to procure copies of the bills already mentioned, that the country may, if she pleases, adopt them, or at least may know how far and how specifically we are embarked in her interest. We have no personal animosity; but should any of the Ministers of the Crown attempt to trample on the people, we are ready to defend them. We conclude—

Resolved, That the affectionate and respectful thanks of this body be returned to the Earl of Moira and the Earl of Charlemont, for their spirited and dignified avowal of the part which they have taken in our deliberations and resolutions; and for the truly patriotic regard which their Lordships have shewn for the invaded privileges of their fellow-citizens, and for their zealous support of the law of the land.

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to sit during the vacation, to correspond with the members of this and other societies, and to prepare such measures as may be rendered necessary to defend our principles and our character; with a power to assemble this club on any emergency, to submit said measures to them for their consideration, on giving due notice.

(Signed) HENRY GRATTAN, Pro Sec.

All these proceedings of the Chancellor served only to rouse the spirit of the citizens. They immediately assembled, and appointed some of the ablest of their body to examine into the case of the Lord Mayor, and adopted at a full meeting the report given in the Appendix,* which correctly details the measures taken by the Government, and sets forth the complaints of the people; it is a very important public document.

Mr. Conolly being absent, the office of Secretary to the Whig Club was filled by Mr. Grattan, who occasionally discharged its duties, until Mr.

* See Appendix, No. I.

Ross M'Can was appointed. This individual was the friend and confidential agent of Mr. Grattan. His name will appear hereafter connected with some important occurrences. He was a public-spirited, and tender-hearted man, a faithful and an honest Irishman, and warmly attached to Mr. Grattan,—of whom, however, he used humorously to observe that "he was the best patriot, but the worst patron." The following letters shew the intimacy that subsisted between them.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Friday Night.

MR. M'CAN,—If you don't come on Sunday, I'll make a motion in the Club that Ogilvie* be appointed Secretary in your place, with *all the great profits, salaries, and emoluments annexed to that wealthy place!!* Be so good as not to write a miserable lame apology, but come.

Yours, H. GRATTAN.

Let me know how Lord Charlemont is. I don't think he was well the other day.

SAME TO SAME.

Tinnehinch.

DEAR M'CAN,—You promise to come to see me often; but you break your promise. That is the only instance in which you appear to have become a *courtier*. Yours truly,

H. GRATTAN.

Mr. Day was now appointed Chairman of Sessions for the county of Dublin, and on the occasion Mr. Grattan wrote to him in the following jocose style:—

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. DAY.

MY DEAR DAY, *Tinnehinch, 13th July*, 1790.

You are an ass. Were you engaged to your Kilmainham friends — dinner in haste before your host was hanged by your own decree? I suppose you get many dinners of this sort:—"Mr. O'Murder's compliments to Justice Day—hopes for his company the day before he is hanged—any time after will be too late." Will you come on Sunday, and fix a party with Broome and me to the mountain?

Yours ever, H. GRATTAN.

* Mr. Ogilvie, who was married to the Duchess of Leinster.

MR. DAY TO MR. GRATTAN.

Merrion Square, 15th July, 1790.

My Dear Grattan,

I don't see, because I prefer my Lord Westmoreland's company to yours, that I must therefore be an ass. You may call that good reasoning; but a logician would say it was a *non sequitur*. Had I, indeed, been apprised in time that the "*phrenzy rolling eye*" of Napper* was to be at the board, I might have been an ass between two bundles of hay,—divided between the representative of his Majesty, and the representative of the majesty of the people. If I can escape out of Kilmainham, you may expect me on Sunday, and of the mountain party. Ever yours,

Robert Day.†

The resolutions of the Whig Club embraced the principal point that the members of the opposition had long contended for in Parliament, and they received very general circulation. They appeared under the title of "Whig Vindication," and gave rise to several pamphlets in reply. They were submitted to Mr. Grattan, as appears from the letters to Mr. M'Can and Mr. Berwick. The latter was chaplain to the Earl of Moira, and connected with Mr. Grattan by intermarriage with the daughter of his early acquaintance and relative, Mr. Bermingham. He was a public-spirited, liberal-minded individual, possessed a great sense of humour and a charming temper. He was an excellent classical scholar, and the author of

* This was James Napper Tandy, who, before this period had taken a very active part in politics, and who took a more active and unfortunate one afterwards. He had been elected master of the corporation of merchants, and had rendered himself popular by his efforts on behalf of the citizens of Dublin, on the election of the Lord Mayor, and was invited by the Lord-Lieutenant.

† Since these pages have gone to press, this excellent and humane man has ceased to exist. He died at his seat near Dublin, at the age of 98. I saw him shortly before his death, in full possession of his faculties. He was reading a manuscript volume of English History that he had compiled, and on turning to the part relating to Jeffries, he broke out into expressions of horror at such a man polluting the bench of justice,—"*that monster in a human form!*" It would have been well if such had been the sentiments of some of the former judges in Ireland.

several productions, which shew his taste and research. He was mild, charitable, and humane; and, at the period of the insurrection of 1798, shewed a disposition becoming a man and a Christian, at that time a circumstance of no ordinary occurrence. His acquaintance with the Moira family and his connexion with Mr. Grattan led him into much intercourse with the opposition. Mr. Preston the poet, Joseph Cooper Walker, author of "Tracts upon Ireland," Mr. Hardy, Mr. Curran, Mr. Berwick, and Mr. Grattan, formed altogether a circle which shed a lustre on private society, softened the asperity of party, and wore off the hard habits of the politicians; they often assembled at Tinnehinch, and there are many who even now may recollect the agreeable hours passed in that society, which united taste and talent, public spirit and public virtue.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Harrowgate, Aug. 11th, 1790.

DEAR M'CAN,

Send me the Evening Post regularly, and also any news. I think the Whig publication still wants correction, before it is published, as our Resolutions were in a distinct paper circulated to the Members. Some further corrections should be made: in the line, "Superior height of public virtue," *superior* should be omitted; however, I have some doubts. There are some other alterations: in the line, "Men fallible and suspicious," *men* should be omitted. Talk to Lord Charlemont about it. Yours ever,

H. G.

I just got the Irish papers. What do they say of our Resolutions?

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. EDWARD BERWICK.

Harrowgate, Sept. 3rd, 1790.

MY DEAR SIR,

Thanks to you for your kind letters and their contents. I am glad to find the Whig vindication* has made an im-

* Mr. T. W. Tone in his memoirs, published in America, relates the following occurrence in reference to this public document:—Mr. Wogan

pression; sure I am at present it is necessary to make some impression, otherwise the administration will tread

Browne, here alluded to, was a public-spirited, active individual, who always supported the liberal cause, and was very useful in upholding the independence of the county of Dublin, at a very trying election on behalf of the Talbot family, when the present Lord Talbot was returned one of its representatives to serve in the Imperial Parliament.

"August 4th, 1790, Wogan Browne, Esq., foreman of the grand jury of the county of Kildare, sent down this evening to the bar-room, a newspaper, of the 3d, containing the resolutions of the Whig Club, in answer to a printed speech, purporting to be that of the Chancellor on the election of Alderman James. It was enclosed in the following letter: 'Mr. Wogan Browne presents his compliments to the gentlemen of the bar; he encloses therein this day's paper, which he has just now received; he requests they will return it to him, and hopes they will find in the vindication of the Whig Club, principles similar to his own; as honest and blunt men must look up to talents for the support of their most undenied rights, in times when they are so shamefully invaded.' —This bold and manly epistle struck the bar of a heap. The father, a supporter of opposition in Parliament, was here only solicitous how he should escape giving an answer; which indeed, every man save one or two, seemed desirous to shift on his neighbour. Burne* and Burrowes† were decided to meet the letter boldly; Brownrigg and Espinasse for taking no further notice than acknowledging the receipt; the first, on the principle of preserving the harmony of the bar; the latter for some time, could assign no reason for his opinion, other than that he did not know who Mr. Browne was; but at length when pressed, he said with equal candour and liberality, that 'he did not like to receive anything from a reformed papist.' The general sense seemed to be for something in reply which should be perfectly insipid; I grew out of patience and proposed, I confess, without hope of its being adopted, a resolution to the following purport:—'That the Leinster Bar, in common with the Whig Club, and many other respectable societies, felt the warmest indignation and abhorrence at the late unconstitutional proceedings of the Privy Council in the election of Alderman James,—proceedings no less formidable to the liberties of the capital than alarming to every city in the kingdom,—as forming part of a system evidently subversive of their franchises, whether established by custom, charter, or the established law of the land.'

"This resolution, the majority seemed determined to conceive that I was not serious in; yet I was: however, being utterly hopeless of support, I did not press it. Two or three civil notes were proposed, of which the following by Rochford may serve as a sample.—'The Leinster Bar present their compliments to Mr. Wogan Browne, and are thankful to him for his obliging communication of this day's paper, which they have the honour of returning.'

"However, the sense of shame in the majority was too high to admit so milky a composition, and at length, after much irregular scuffling, the following was adopted as an answer: 'The Leinster Bar return their

* A liberal minded and constitutional lawyer.

† Mr. Peter Burrowes, the distinguished advocate, and on all occasions, the friend of public liberty.

down the people, in all their orders and degrees — Dukes, Earls, and Commons; it is not rank, but office, that is now necessary to consecrate the subject against the levelling principle of Ministerial insolence. I like the preface much; it was necessary, and is useful and pointed. I have not read the defences—neither the one which you sent me, nor the other published in some of the papers of Dublin and London; but I looked into both, and saw refutable matter in abundance. One would think from both that animadversion on a judicial character is an unexpiable offence; but that animadversions by that judicial character made on other judicial characters, and on the whole body of the people, is an extraordinary virtue. The publications ought to be answered, otherwise they will give cause to boast. The Castle will say they were unanswerable, not contemptible. Besides, it is much better for us that the subject should not be dropped. The Chancellor is, I believe, vexed; but could he expect to abuse us as a pack of blockheads, and not to meet retaliation? I wish you would speak to M'Can, that no publication should come out in answer until well considered.

Since I wrote the above, I have read the pamphlet, and am very glad it has been written, because it gives a great opportunity and a great opening. The law part is a begging of the question in every position. I don't think it can make any impression, because it is too drowsy to read, as well as too illogical to convince. The only chance it has of being read, is being preserved in the answer to it.

If you see M'Can, tell him the newspapers are to be directed to Buxton, Derbyshire. M'Can writes in high spirits, and says we are very popular. Yours ever,

H. GRATTAN.

Is Lord Rawdon gone to England?

The new Parliament had assembled on the 2nd July, 1790, when Mr. Conolly proposed Mr. Wm.

thanks to Mr. Wogan Browne for his early communication of the resolutions of the Whig Club. However, individually, a majority of the gentlemen present may approve of the spirit of those resolutions, yet as many respectable members are absent, the bar as a body, do not feel themselves authorized to give any further opinion on the subject of Mr. Browne's letter.' The words, 'majority of gentlemen present,' being objected to by Mr. Moore, produced a division to ascertain the point, when nine were for continuing, and five were for expunging them.

"N. B. Such is the public spirit and virtue of the Leinster Bar."

Ponsonby as Speaker; but the choice fell on Mr. Foster, who was proposed by Major Hobart, and again elected without a division. The speech from the throne communicated the intelligence of two British vessels having been captured by the Spaniards off the American coast, and their crews imprisoned. The answer to this speech by the House of Commons was remarkable for the unanimity it displayed, and the determination to support the British connexion and British Constitution. In this sentiment Mr. Grattan and the leaders of the opposition fully joined. Parliament was then prorogued, and did not meet till the ensuing year.

Mr. Grattan, whose mind was always active, now sought for information on the subject which his friend Mr. Forbes had undertaken to manage, viz. the Responsibility Bill. In Ireland, the minister was not responsible. Impeachment, or an address to the Crown, was the only mode of punishing political delinquents. Mr. Forbes prepared a bill to remedy this omission, and hence the desire expressed by Mr. Grattan in the subjoined letter.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. DAY.

Tinnehinch, 24th Dec., 1790.

My Dear Day,

What acts in Ireland are done by the authority of the sign manual? Are not all commissions in the army under the sign manual? Is not the commission or patent of the Lord-lieutenant under the sign manual? I know it is under the great seal of England; but is it not also under the sign manual, as an order to the privy seal, which is an order to the great seal? With secrecy and certainty, as soon as possible, find out for me the above questions. Why I enjoin secrecy I'll tell you this day, when I expect to see you at dinner. Most sincerely yours,

H. Grattan.

Don't omit to come to me *to-day*.

REPLY.

For the appointment of a Lord-lieutenant there first passes a patent in England, and then there comes over to Ireland a King's letter, signed at the top of the page (i. e. superscribed) with the King's sign manual, and undersigned by the Secretary of State of England, directed to the Lord-lieutenant or Lords Justices, directing him or them to prepare patents under the great seal of the kingdom of Ireland. This King's letter is transmitted to the Attorney or Solicitor General, or in their absence, to any of the King's counsel, to prepare what is called the *Fiant* for passing the patent. When signed by them, or any of them, it goes to the Signet Office, that is, to the Office of the Secretary of State. After it is there signed, it goes to the Hanaper Office, and the clerk prepares an engrossment of the patent, which is transmitted to the Chancellor's secretary, and by him laid before the Chancellor, who puts the great seal to it. From thence it goes to the Rolls Office, where it is enrolled, there being a provision contained in all patents that they are to be void if not enrolled within six months.

Commissions in the army are superscribed by the King's sign manual, and undersigned by the Secretary at War.

CHAPTER II.

Meeting of Parliament, January, 1791—Speeches of Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Grattan—Character and conduct of Lord Westmoreland—Public feeling in Ireland—Dinner by the Whigs of the capital—Resolutions of the Volunteers—Decree of Louis XVI. in favour of toleration—French revolution—French principles in Ireland—Question of Roman Catholic Emancipation—Effect of the penal laws—Edmund Burke's writings in favour of the Catholics—Ill treatment of the Catholics by the Government—Their communication with the Whig Club—Lord Kenmare's address to the Lord-lieutenant—Address of the "Sixty-eight"—People disapprove of both addresses—Conduct of the Opposition—Meeting of Parliament, January, 1792—Mr. Grattan's speech—Remarkable eulogy on Dean Kirwan—Account of his charity sermons.

Parliament met on the 20th January, 1791. The speech from the throne announced that the rupture between Spain and England had been amicably adjusted, but stated nothing further of importance. The Opposition renewed their enquiries respecting the corrupt proceedings of the late Government. Mr. Ponsonby moved, on the 3rd of February, to enquire into the pensions and additional salaries granted by Government. Mr. Grattan seconded the motion, which was rejected by 117 to 56.

Such a majority at the outset of a new Parliament, and one of its first votes, augured ill for the reformation of abuses and the improvement in the system of Government. Mr. Isaac Corry appeared on this occasion as a defender of the Marquess of Buckingham.

On the 8th of February, Mr. Grattan renewed his motion respecting the sale of peerages, and moved for a Committee to prove the fact. On that occasion, Mr. Ponsonby said—

"If gentlemen are unwilling to risk their reputation by instituting an enquiry on the ground of common fame, I will state to them what they will consider sufficient ground for this enquiry—a member of this house standing up and asserting that he had good reason to believe that peerages have been sold. This, Mr. Speaker, the gentlemen opposite will acknowledge to be good ground for enquiry. Sir, I am that man. I say I have good reason to believe that *peerages have been sold for money;* nay, more, *I have proof.* Go into a Committee; and if I do not establish my charge, degrade me; let me no longer enjoy the character of an honest man. I dare the administration to it. *I risk my reputation on establishing the fact.*"

The motion was strongly opposed by the Government,* though the facts therein stated were confidently offered to be established in proof by the chief members of the Opposition; but it was defeated by a majority of 135 to 81.

The question respecting the East India trade was revived, and an effort to open that extensive commerce to Ireland was again made, but in vain. The motion to that effect, proposed by Mr. Ponsonby, was lost by 143 to 86. The Barren Land Bill, by Mr. Grattan, and the Pension and Responsibility Bills, by Mr. Forbes, were proposed, but without success. The object of the latter bill was to have some responsible men to disburse the public money, as in England, where no charges or drafts could be issued except by individuals whose signatures made them responsible to the public; whereas in Ireland the Lord-lieutenant could issue the money, signing the warrant at the top, and the Secretary at the bottom, neither of whom afforded sufficient responsibility. This debate lasted till near four o'clock on Sunday morning, and the second reading was rejected by 131 to 64. The following are

* Mr. Barrington, author of the "History of the Union," appears to have made as strong a speech in favour of Government as he afterwards did at a subsequent period against them.

Mr. Grattan's remarks: — they apply to later times also, than those in which they were made.

"Sir, those gentlemen have most ignorantly foretold what would be the Government under this bill. I will tell these gentlemen most truly what is now the Irish Government without it. What is their situation? A set of men excluded in their native land from power and control, privileged only to submit their objections, without any authority to stop the crime they complain of. This exclusion from all control in the disbursement of money, makes them a cypher. That control, exclusively placed in the Lord-lieutenant's secretary, his Excellency and certain English officers, makes them your masters, and the Secretary on that bench your idol. It is no longer control,—it is command: it is this command that makes him more formidable than the thunder of Demosthenes, and more persuasive than Tully; or, if the name of Solomon delight him more, Solomon in all his glory, sitting among his state concubines. See at the feet of a young lad the tributes of a degraded court. See prostrate at his feet the wisdom of age and the flame of youth,—the grey head of experience, the country gentleman's shattered mask, and the veteran Crown lawyers' prostituted conscience and howling remorse. Even the virtues which this man don't entirely destroy, he disgraces—he humbles the energies of your mind, and contracts the exertions of your talents. He not only humbles your virtues, he degrades your vices, and gives them a poorer cast; so that you lose the high mettle which sometimes mixes with human infirmity, dignifies the nature of vice, and makes ambition virtue. You do not make this man a Colossus; but he makes you pigmies, and both lose your natural proportion—he, his natural inferiority, and you, your natural superiority in your native land. Thus you stand on your own hills blasted by a shrub which scalds your growth, and diminishes and dwarfs what else might become the tree of the forest, and make the realm illustrious."

The session of 1791 concluded on the 5th of May, and Parliament was shortly after prorogued. The Opposition seemed disposed to give every fair opportunity to Government; they had made no violent motions, nor suggested any new or

extravagant questions; nor had they incited the Roman Catholics to urge on their claims. They did not seek to embarrass the Government; but having set forth their principles, they left to those in power the carrying into effect such measures as might appear to be of public utility. No friendly disposition was manifested, however, by the Ministry. They delayed all their concessions* till the time had passed in which they would have been received by the people with gratitude and satisfaction.

Lord Westmoreland, who should never have been sent to Ireland, was a person quite incompetent to hold the reins of power, and seemed more fitted to guide a chariot than to govern a country. His mind was of an inferior grade; it belonged not to the Court—not to the drawing-room—not even to the parlour. When he was clean, washed, dressed, and powdered, and put on his blue riband, he looked as if he had stolen it from some gentleman, and taken refuge in fright in the House of Lords. Certain it is, that he met there company much above him, and to which, as he shewed by his manners and principles, he did not belong. He seemed quite forgetful of his situation as representative of Royalty, and heedless of the approaching storm which was gathering around him, his object seemed to be to degrade the House of Commons, as his predecessor's (the Marquess of Buckingham) to corrupt it, and both to effect its destruction. He stooped to gratify the low passions of others; he possessed nothing that was noble of his own, and never would have been taken for the Lord-lieutenant, if it had not been for the star and riband that he wore. He insulted Lord Charlemont, and thereby offended the Protestants of the north and the Volunteers.

* These were very few—Place Bill and Pension Bill.

He soon after proceeded to insult the Catholics of the south; so that he lost all support among the people, and stripped the Royal station of everything that could command respect or love. In place of these, he set up a new party, and gave birth to an unconstitutional and illegitimate conception—"*monstrum horrendum, ingens, cui lumen ademptum*"—the high church party,—that origin of evil,—that assumed the name of "Protestant ascendancy," and sought to divide the people under the pretence of upholding the church and state; in other words, a civil and ecclesiastical tyranny.

Such a proceeding was mischievous in the extreme, and the more deserving of censure, because at this period a friendly and conciliatory disposition pervaded all classes throughout the country. There existed discontent but not disaffection,—there was some disturbance but no treason; the only hostility that prevailed was against the corruption and abuses of the Government.

The sentiments of the Whig leaders were constitutional as well as patriotic,—safe for the Government and serviceable for the state, and almost universally approved of by the people. Their spirit and character may be judged of from the account of a public dinner given by a society called the Whigs of the Capital, composed of the public-spirited citizens of Dublin, which took place early in 1791; * and when at the close of the year, an attempt was made to excite divisions

* On Monday, the Whigs of the Capital dined at the Eagle in Eustace-street, to which were invited the Lord Mayor, his Grace the Duke of Leinster, Lord Charlemont, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Curran, Mr. Ponsonby, and several other noble and eminently patriotic characters.

The following, among a variety of other toasts, were drunk:—

The King.—Prince of Wales.—The House of Brunswick; may it ever regard Ireland, as the Parliament of Ireland regarded it, on the Regency question.—Rights of the people.—Friends of freedom.—Glori-

among the people, and kindle a religious war by recommending that legal steps should be taken against Roman Catholics who carried arms contrary to the existing laws,*—the Protestant members of the Volunteer Corps assembled to protest against such a proceeding, and condemned the publication that recommended it. In their resolutions they quoted a decree of that ill-fated monarch, Louis XVI. of France, almost one of his last acts, and which, great as his faults and his weakness may have been, reflects upon his memory the highest honour.†

In England also, bigotry seemed on the decline, and a spirit of liberality had arisen. In the month of March, 1791, Mr. Mitford brought forward his Bill to relieve Roman Catholic Dissenters, opening to them the magistracy, the profession of the bar, legalizing their places of worship, and conferring eligibility to certain minor offices in the state. It passed quickly and quietly through its

ous and immortal memory.—May the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland, founded on equal constitution, last for ever.—Volunteers of Ireland; three cheers.—The Whig Club of Ireland.—Duke of Portland, and Whigs of England.—Unceasing opposition to the system of a pensioned Magistracy.—Majority of the Commons of the Common Council; three cheers.—His Majesty's counsellors who advised the court not to trample on the city.—The free electors of the city of Dublin; may they ever choose well, and ever return the objects of their choice.—The liberty of the press.—The rights of Ireland.—Glorious revolution of 1782.—The General of the Volunteers of Ireland; may he live long and be happy; three cheers.—Lord Charlemont then gave the following toast, viz. May the Volunteers of Ireland never want a General that loves them as I do! three cheers.—General Washington; three cheers.—Memory of John Hampden.—Memory of Doctor Franklin.—The immortal memory of Doctor Charles Lucas.—The late Earl of Chatham, his Hawke, his Wolfe, and all the heroes of his day.—Charles J. Fox, a British Senator, who would not bribe Ireland to sell her Constitution.—R. B. Sheridan, and when Ireland celebrates her glorious 110, may she never forget the friend who maintained her rights in England.

* The resolutions of the county of Armagh Grand Jury, in the spring of 1791, stated that a rage for arming existed amongst the Catholics, and to stop it, they ordered a reward of five guineas for the conviction of each of the first twenty persons so arming.

† See Appendix, II. No. 2.

various stages in both Houses without opposition, and without a single division.

Such were the generous sentiments and the liberal spirit which animated both countries and all classes of people. How it happened that this spirit disappeared,—that these fine sentiments changed,—and that, while America and Europe had progressed in civil and religious freedom, England and Ireland should have retrograded: how, in place of harmony, discord appeared, and in place of religion, bigotry; and why the people were driven into violent courses, and induced to follow extreme principles and measures;—all this is a matter of surprise as well as sorrow, and can only be accounted for by that fatality which overhung the destinies of Ireland, and swayed those councils which had for so long misruled the realm.

Unfortunately for the peace of Europe, and in particular for Ireland, a direful and portentous event now occurred, which, baffling all conjecture, spread dismay and destruction far and wide. This was the French Revolution.

At the commencement of this astonishing political drama, every lover of freedom must have rejoiced, and ought to have rejoiced at seeing a bad Government destroyed, an insolent and oppressive nobility humbled, and a rapacious clergy restrained. But the people did not stop there; they went to the opposite extreme; they rushed headlong into all sorts of extravagance and madness; they became fanatics, starting aside from the course pointed out by reason and right, like wild men; debating everything—altering everything—inverting everything—giving everything a new name—investing all with a ridiculous affectation; and in seeking to prove that they possessed a better understanding of what a Government

ought to be than any other people, they shewed that they knew nothing about Government whatsoever. It seemed as if a rank and profligate court had called down the judgment of Heaven,—to be executed by a set of vain philosophers, who exceeded the very crimes they punished, until they themselves were destroyed by a superior man of blood,* who in his turn was extolled, deposed, and executed!

No crime exists in vain. Ambition murders ambition. Liberty—equality—the rights of man, are words very captivating in sound, but much abused in sense. The destruction of the Bastile in 1789, the establishment of a national representative assembly, and the promulgation of a free Constitution, were not considered sufficient securities for the peace and prosperity of the French nation. Greater sacrifices were demanded, and other immolations were required; and that light which arose so bright at its commencement, became bloody and horrid at its close. Doctrines of unlimited democracy were set on foot, and the Irish, who are too aptto catch other people's follies, (for they are an imitative nation,) to a certain extent adopted them.

But the leading and influential portion of the nation were not captivated by the illusions of the French drama. Lord Charlemont, Mr. Grattan, and Mr. Ponsonby sought to restrain the ardour of those who were inclined to embrace the frenzy and folly of foreign and fantastic novelty. The north of Ireland and its stubborn Presbyterians were first affected,—that old leaven which, Mr. Fox said, "fermented and kneaded together the principles of the British Constitution." On the 14th of July, 1791, the Volunteers and citizens held, at Belfast, a meeting in commemoration of the French

* Robespierre.

Revolution,—the memory of the 14th July, 1789, —the National Assembly of France,—Mr. Paine, &c. &c. They published a declaration of their political opinions, and an address of congratulation to the French people. To this the French replied, and returned them thanks for their approbation.

These demonstrations were not, however, general throughout Ireland. The North, and Dublin were the chief places thus affected; and it is probable that if the Minister had yielded in time to the just demands of the people, and abated the unconstitutional influence that he exercised over the House of Commons, the people would have joyfully acquiesced in the established order of things, and sought for no changes that were unconstitutional, and no interference that was not legitimate. But the persevering violence of the Government; the religious animosity their followers excited; the intemperance of the Chancellor, who assumed and insisted on the mastership of the Government; the rancorous and violent abuse of the people; and the mischievous purposes to which the Catholic question was perverted,— all these baffled the moderate, frustrated the constitutional objects of the Opposition, and goaded the violent and headstrong party (a body wholly distinct from and opposed to the Opposition) into acts of violence, domestic disturbance, foreign alliance, and fatal insurrection.

Lord Charlemont always feared French principles, and stood out against them from the first.* Mr. Grattan also prophetically admonished his countrymen in beautiful language, but unfortunately true—"*Touch not this plant of Gallic growth; its taste is death, though 'tis not the tree of knowledge.*"

Amidst the convulsions that agitated Europe,

* M'Nevin's Pieces of Irish History, p. 17, New York Ed.

the progress of revolutionary doctrines, and the extent to which they had gone even in England, far surpassing those in Ireland, it can scarcely be imagined that the Irish mind could remain tranquil or unaffected, and that, while in other countries the people aimed at the entire exercise of the powers of Government, the Irish Roman Catholics would rest satisfied with total exclusion from the Constitution, and not seek to participate in the administration of the affairs of their own country. This would have been a greater degree of servility than the penal laws even could have produced, and a baseness that could not be accounted for by any principles of human nature.

The Roman Catholic question may be said to have taken its rise in the year 1790. It proceeded from natural causes:—the politics of Europe,—the French Revolution,—the concessions to the English Catholics,—and the ordinary progress of the human mind. These produced a necessary effect upon the Irish people, and urged them to assert their just and rightful claims.

At the outset, their case was attended by a system of irritation,* afterwards accompanied by coercion,† and finally succeeded by torture.‡ The laws against the Catholics were not laws against subjects, but against proscribed persons, enemies of the state. Whether any Government had a right to enact such laws may be questionable; for the omnipotence of Parliament is an absurdity. Parliament being created by society, and society by the Deity, both are subordinate to his laws; and the power that limits their faculties limits their authority. Parliament might enact

* Abuse of the Catholics in speeches delivered in Parliament, and addresses against them got up among the Grand Juries of Ireland.

† Violent measures adopted by Government, Convention, Gunpowder, and Arms Bills.

‡ Flagellation, Pitch-caps, Triangles, half hanging.

that two and two make six, or that all men should be of one religion, and add to such an act a penal clause, and punish accordingly;—but there exists no power to enforce such acts. A man keeps his own conscience secret; no other person knows what passes there. Therefore, the penal laws were contrary, not only to the laws of nature, but to those of God.

Afterwards, when the Catholics were allowed to remain in the country, and took the oath of allegiance, the penal laws should have ceased;—for the people became subjects, and then there could be no possible right to inflict such penalties upon them. Until lately, they had not been considered as subjects, nor were they called Catholics; they were termed Papists by way of mark; and not being considered as objects of law, they had nothing to which law would apply. They were deprived of their liberty, and not permitted to acquire property. They had no inducement to submit to Government; consequently, *their allegiance became merely a matter of prudence.* The Protestants formerly had deprived Ireland of her free Parliament, of her commerce, and of her Constitution; they shewed that they were bad politicians:—they should have given the Catholics one of these acquisitions, in order that they might have an inducement to defend them; for by giving them property, they would have gained strength to defend the liberty of the one party, and the property of both. But now the Catholics had acquired personal property, real property, and civil rights to a certain extent, and naturally they sought for more. Their increasing numbers; their rising strength; their hereditary claims; their attachment to the country which they had not forsaken; their attachment to their religion, which they had not abandoned, and from which

they could not be seduced;—all these gave them hope, spirit, and determination.

There were other circumstances also that operated at this time in their favour. Independent of the advantage derived from passing the English Bill, they received powerful assistance from an old and faithful friend—Edmund Burke, the earliest champion of their cause, their brilliant defender. He had, as far back as the year 1765, commenced by writing his tracts upon the Popery laws; in 1778, he addressed a letter to Mr. Pery, then Speaker of the House of Commons, on the subject of the heads of a Bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics of Ireland; in 1780, he published a letter to Thomas Burgh, relative to his conduct on the affairs of Ireland; in 1782, he wrote to a peer of Ireland upon the subject of the penal laws prior to their partial repeal. These numerous publications were disseminated through the country, and opened the minds of the people. He now* commissioned his son to act on their behalf as secretary to the Catholics, and assisted him in his mission to Ireland for that purpose; and shortly after, he wrote in 1792 his first letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe on the grant of the elective franchise.

Owing to these services, Edmund Burke deservedly possessed great influence in Ireland; but in England he acquired it from other circumstances. He had uniformly opposed the advance of French principles, and from the outset combated the introduction of revolutionary doctrines into England; this too at the loss of one of his earliest political friends.† His letters on that subject had rendered him popular among the aristocracy and the wealthy portion of the people of Great Britain, and more acceptable in the eyes of Mr.

* 1791. † Mr. Fox.

Pitt; consequently, his opinion on Irish affairs was more favourably received, and listened to with more attention.

The treatment which the Roman Catholics now received from Government was harsh and inconsistent. They had prepared, in the year 1790, a petition to Parliament, modest and humble in its tenor, asking nothing specific, and merely requesting that their case might be taken into favourable consideration. They waited on Government, and besought their support, but in vain; they applied to have their petition presented to the House, but they could not get a single member to do so.

When the Lord-lieutenant, at the close of the year 1790, visited the south of Ireland, the Catholics of Cork prepared an address expressive of their loyalty, and concluding with the hope of some *relaxation of the penal laws. The address was returned with a desire that the concluding part might be struck out*, and that then it would be received. This submission the Catholics very properly refused. They then deputed twelve of their body to go to the Government with a list of the penal laws, and to request that they would support the repeal of any part that they might think proper. The Castle people did not even condescend to give them an answer!

At length in September, 1791, they sent one of their body (Mr. Keogh) to London to represent to the Minister their abject state. He returned in three months, and the result of his mission to England was, that no objection would be made if the Irish Parliament thought proper to open to them the profession of the law, or confer eligibility to the office of county magistrates, grand jurors, and sheriffs; and that the question of the elective franchise would be taken into consideration. They then applied, in 1791, to some of the Oppo-

sition, and Mr. Pollock, author of the celebrated Letters* of Owen Roe O'Neal in 1779, held a communication on their behalf with the Whig Club, stating a very limited measure of relief. Mr. Pollock had been their firm friend, and, as has been stated in a former volume, had taken an active part on behalf of the liberties of his countrymen.

In reference to this subject, and with a view of ascertaining the extent of their demand, Mr. Grattan wrote the following letter:—

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Bray, July 26th, 1791.

My Dear M'Can,—Ask M'Kenna,† from me, whether the overtures from Mr. Pollock to the Whig Club, on the part of the Roman Catholics, expressed all the articles of their present wishes. I know Pollock is their able friend, and deservedly high in their esteem. Tell M'Kenna that I wish to have an answer soon, as some of the Opposition will quickly leave town, and I must be at the close of this week at Celbridge, from whence I shall go to Carton, to the Duke,‡ on this very subject. Yours, H. Grattan.

The result of the application was, that the Catholics were advised not to link themselves with the Opposition, who could not carry their question, but to resort to the Lord-lieutenant's Secretary (Mr. Hobart). The reply and the letter, which fortunately is extant, fully exonerate the Opposition from the charges brought against them by the friends of Government, and by the opponents of the Catholics, who, even so late as in 1805,§ on the debate on Mr. Fox's motion, asserted that the Roman Catholics had been excited by the Opposition, and particularly by Mr. Grattan. Independent of the absurd idea that

* On the right of Ireland to a free and independent Parliament.

† An active individual among the Catholics.

‡ The Duke of Leinster.

§ See Mr. Fox's motion on the Catholics, 1805, Grattan's Speeches vol. iv.

any body of people possessed of the ordinary spirit of men would tamely submit to a system of exclusion such as the penal laws inflicted, this letter, and the advice given in consequence, furnishes the fullest refutation.

The penal laws had produced their baneful effects upon the Catholic mind; they had rendered the upper classes servile, the lower classes timid; crouching at one moment,—frantic at another.

"Frenzy for joy—for grief, despair."

In 1783, Lord Kenmare and his friends, as has been already stated, had sent a blind sort of message to the Volunteer Convention, in reference to the elective franchise; and he now made,* on behalf of himself and the Catholic people of his county, a miserable apology to Lord Westmoreland for the silence of that sect, or rather for the blessing of their degraded existence, which he put forward in the shape of a servile loyal address,—disclaiming all discontent and all impatience, and relying for future favours upon the

* To his Excellency John Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland.

We, the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the county of Kerry, finding that certain writings are published in this kingdom, and associations attempted to be formed, which might possibly sow the seeds of discontent and impatience amongst the lower classes of our persuasion, humbly beg leave, under these circumstances, to present your Excellency the most unfeigned assurances of our unshaken loyalty, perfect submission to the laws, and most grateful and dutiful attachment to his Majesty's person and Government; we also humbly entreat your Excellency to accept our solemn declaration, that we hold in abhorrence every Act, that can in the remotest degree, savour of, sanction, or excite commotion in the state; that we are firmly determined always to persevere in that peaceable conduct, which has merited, for our body, a relaxation of the penal statutes, made in angry times against them; and, on this conduct alone, we rely for further favours from an enlightened legislature, and a mild and auspicious government, such as we have the happiness of living under.

KENMARE, for himself and the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the co. Kerry.
GERARD TEAHAN, for myself and the Roman Catholic Clergy of Kerry.

Dec., 1791.

enlightened legislature, and the mild Government under which they had the happiness to live!—Lord Westmoreland, who had so insulted them the year before!—This, however, was considered, even by the Catholic aristocracy, as too servile, and Lords Fingal and Gormanstown, and Doctor Troy, the titular Archbishop of Dublin, together with a number of gentlemen from fourteen counties, amounting in all to sixty-eight, presented an address to the Lord-lieutenant, expressive of their loyalty and attachment to the King,—disclaiming everything which might create alarm in the minds of their brethren,—expressing their gratitude for former concessions, but stating their determination to apply to Parliament the ensuing session, without, however, presuming to point out the extent of the relief demanded. The Lord-lieutenant replied, that he received with satisfaction their declaration of loyalty to the King, and attachment to the Constitution, and that he would not fail to make a faithful representation thereof to his Majesty.*

* To His Excellency John Earl of Westmoreland:

We, the undernamed, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, Roman Catholics of the kingdom of Ireland, desirous at all times to declare unequivocally our sentiments of loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign, and our attachment to the Constitution, disclaiming every word or Act which can directly or indirectly tend to alarm the minds of our brethren, or disturb the tranquillity of this country, have, in order to prevent misrepresentation or misconception of our sentiments, thought it necessary now to lay before your Excellency the resolutions hereunto annexed.

We confide in your Excellency's goodness that you will be pleased to represent us to our most gracious Sovereign, such as we really are, grateful for the mild and benevolent disposition he has been always graciously pleased to show towards us.

We rely with confidence on our past as a pledge for our future good conduct, and as we feel most strongly the benefits that have arisen, not only to us in particular, but to this kingdom in general, from the indulgence which, through the wisdom of the legislature, we have already received, so we look with respectful confidence to its wisdom, liberality, and benevolence, for a further extension of its favours.

Resolved, that application be made to the legislature during the next

Neither of these addresses, however, proved satisfactory to the great body of the Roman Catholics. They assembled in the principal towns and counties throughout the kingdom; they resolved to petition for the repeal of the penal laws; they disclaimed the sentiments contained in the address; censured Lord Kenmare's conduct; expressed their reliance and confidence in the general committee acting on their behalf, and to which they sent delegates to represent and act for them. This committee assembled, debated, passed resolutions and addresses, expelled Lord Kenmare, published their debates, and acted as a body representing the Catholics of the entire kingdom, by whom their authority was universally recognised.

Their question was now impelled forward by a singular coincidence of circumstances;—the weakness and timidity of some of their own party at first, and the violence and extravagance of their opponents afterwards. Thus the motion of this great body politic was increased by causes directly opposite to each other:—Lord Kenmare's party, and his weak address† in December 1791, and Lord

session of Parliament, for a further repeal of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics of Ireland.

That grateful for former concessions, we do not presume to point out the measure or extent to which such repeal should be carried, but leave the same to the wisdom and discretion of the legislature, fully confiding in their liberality and benevolence, that it will be as extensive as the circumstances of the times and the general welfare of the empire shall, in their consideration, render prudent and expedient.

That firmly attached to our most gracious Sovereign and the Constitution of the kingdom, and anxiously desirous to promote tranquillity and subjection to the laws, we will studiously avoid all measures which can either directly or indirectly tend to disturb or impede the same, and will rely on the wisdom and benevolence of the legislature, as the source from which we desire to obtain a further relaxation of the above mentioned laws.

(Dec. 27th, 1791.)

† General Committee of Roman Catholics, January 14th, 1792. The following resolutions passed unanimously:—

Resolved, that Lord Kenmare has entirely forfeited our confidence by

Clare's violent conduct, the corporation and grand jury addresses, in 1792.

his late conduct, in procuring, by his own exertions and those of his emissaries, certain insidious and servile addresses, calculated to divide the Catholics of Ireland, and eventually to defeat their just applications for relief from the grievous oppressions under which they have so long laboured.

Resolved therefore, and in compliance with the wishes of a most respectable number of the Catholic people, communicated to us by their delegates, that Lord Kenmare be, and is hereby struck off the list of the sub-committee appointed to make applications to the legislature in their name for a further repeal of the penal laws.

Signed by Order, RICHARD M'CORMICK, Sec.

Resolved, That an address be presented to the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, to request his Excellency to certify to his Majesty the ardent, zealous, and loyal attachment of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom to his Majesty's person and Government, and to lay before his Majesty the motives which have induced us to withhold our signatures from a certain paper, purporting to be an address to the Lord-lieutenant, with resolutions annexed, and presented to his Excellency by Lord Kenmare, on the 27th of December, and also to explain at large to his Majesty the circumstances of that whole transaction.

That it is the opinion of this committee, that many or most of the persons who signed the said address, being ignorant of several collateral and antecedent circumstances, could not possibly apprehend the real drift and object thereof, and consequently that the said address was surreptitiously obtained.

That the said address (under pretence of satisfying unfounded alarms, and a supposed uneasiness in the public mind, which had no real existence) was fabricated for the purpose of throwing imputations of faction and turbulence on this committee, for refusing to disavow a publication in which this committee were not concerned, and principles of sedition which that publication did not contain, and with which the Roman Catholics of this kingdom never have been tainted.

That the said address, replete with ambiguous expressions, was also intended, obliquely and insidiously, to convey an opinion that this committee was not composed of the men of property and respectable gentlemen of our persuasion, but of low and factious persons, not really representing the consequence, or speaking the voice of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom.

That the said implications, both equally false, are highly prejudicial to the interests of the Roman Catholics, and to the community at large, as rendering it difficult to ascertain with whom, or on what principles to deal with the Roman Catholics, from the uncertainty of knowing who is, or who is not entitled to speak their voice.

That the said address was likewise the vehicle of another design of a still more dangerous tendency, viz. to convey a false impression to the nation, to the parliament, and to the king himself, concerning the true state, the real wants, the temper and dispositions of this great body of his Majesty's subjects; things most necessary to be known, and duly attended to by every wise government.

That this desperate and complicated stratagem was still far-

The benefit that the Catholics derived from these proceedings was purely accidental; but

ther aggravated by laying a trap for the loyalty of our body, and coming forward under cover of an address to his Majesty, which being the natural channel of communication between king and people, ought ever to be preserved sacred and inviolate from all fraud and deceit.

That another object of the promoters of the said address was to form divisions, and to disseminate discord among the Roman Catholics, in order to obstruct their emancipation; a project which has for some time past been carried on with great art and industry, which has more particularly appeared in an attempt to seduce the Roman Catholic clergy from the laity, and to set them at variance; which, by converting the ministers of the gospel into instruments of oppression, tends to vitiate the purest source of confidence, to weaken the closest bonds of society, and to endanger the very being of religion in the minds of the people.

That the devices concealed in the said address, and many other proceedings of a similar nature, only render it more incumbent on the committee to continue its exertions to procure the repeal of laws, which gratify but do not allay, the animosity of our adversaries, and which, instead of co-operation, procure us enemies, even in the companions of our afflictions.

That though the Roman Catholics of this kingdom labour under many severe restrictions, they are not, and never were, deprived of all their rights.

That it is not only the undoubted right, but also the bounden duty, of all the subjects of this realm, by petition to parliament, both to point out their own particular grievances, and also to offer their opinions to the legislature, concerning the interests and general policy of the kingdom, whenever they shall in their conscientious judgment think it necessary.

That the proper mode be adopted to call the attention of parliament to the grievances of the Roman Catholics, and to point out the measure and extent to which it is expedient and necessary to relieve them from the restrictions and disqualifications under which they labour.

That it is declared by a statute passed in the 17th and 18th of his present Majesty, as follows: viz. "It must add not only to the cultivation and improvement of this kingdom, but to the prosperity and strength of all his Majesty's dominions, that his subjects of all denominations should enjoy the blessings of our free constitution."

That notwithstanding the aforesaid declaration, the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, neither having, nor being by law capable to acquire, any right, privilege, or franchise, elective or representative, "are wholly excluded and separated out of and from the high court of parliament, to have any knights or burgesses within the said court, and forasmuch as the said Roman Catholics have always hitherto been bound by the acts and statutes made in the same court, they have oftentimes sustained manifold losses and damages, and have been grieved with acts and statutes made within the said court, as well as derogatory to their liberties and privileges, as prejudicial to the politic government and maintenance of the common weal."

That an humble and dutiful representation be made to parlia-

they derived another and substantial benefit from the prudence and wisdom of their friends. The Opposition, finding they had not influence enough to carry in Parliament any measure, determined not to take up the Catholic as a party question. Mr. Grattan's uniform opinion, both in the Irish and the Imperial Parliament, was that it should not be made an opposition question; and thus the Catholics, though apparently left unbefriended, had nevertheless every reason to be thankful, inasmuch as by this judicious management, they got on their side two powerful auxiliaries — Mr. Hobart, who was one of the Government, and Sir Hercules Langrishe, who was not a decided oppositionist.

The Parliamentary session commenced on the 19th of January 1792. The speech from the throne, stated that the country had made great progress in trade, manufactures, and industry, but mentioned nothing whatever with regard to the Catholics. Mr. Grattan appears to have made almost a *valedictory* speech, nearly foretelling the fate of the Parliament and the Constitution. He recapitulated the errors committed by the Government, and summed up their offences in a masterly manner. His statement affords a correct picture of the mode in which Ireland has always been governed except in 1782, when she may be said to have governed herself.

"Your present ministers made two attempts on your liberties; the first failed, and the second has succeeded: you remember the first, you remember the propositions: the people of Ireland would not consent to be governed by the British Parliament. An expedient was devised;—let the Irish Parliament govern the people of Ireland, and Britain govern the Irish Parliament.

ment, that in conformity to the above cited declaration, that their capital grievance, the cause of every other, be alleviated or finally done away.

Signed by order, RICHARD M'CORMICK, Sec.

"The second attempt was modelling of the Parliament in 1789; fifteen new salaries, with several of new pensions to the members thereof, were created at once, and added to the old overgrown Parliamentary influence of the Crown. In other words, the expenditure of the interest of half a million to buy the House of Commons, the sale of the peerage, and the purchase of seats in the Commons, the formation of a stock-purse by the minister to monopolize boroughs, and buy up representation. This new practice, whereby the minister of the Crown becomes the common borough-broker of the kingdom, constitutes an offence so multitudinous, and in all its parts so criminal, as to call for radical reformation and exemplary punishment."

He stated what a number of measures had been proposed by the opposition, and lost. The Place Bill, the Pension Bill, the Responsibility Bill, the Barren Land Bill (which had been pronounced by the Attorney-general to have been the best bill ever brought into Parliament); he condemned the proceedings in the case of the *fiats*, and the excessive bail required by the judges, which he considered most injurious to the civil liberty of the subject. He complained of the Commissioners of Revenue for not encouraging the breweries, and discouraging the consumption of whiskey.

In rejecting both the Place and Pension Bill, the ministerial language, he said, was this:—

"It is true, they are the laws of England, but they are not fit for the meridian of Ireland. This is much more than asserting that Ireland should not be free,—it is asserting that England should be free, and that Ireland should not; you may put the question of servitude in such a shape as to disgust the pride of a Cappadocian. The lot of Ireland, according to this reasoning, becomes particular degradation. We bear misfortunes patiently, because they are the portion of man; but if they were the inheritance of you and of me only,—if the imperfection of the dispensations, ordinances, and degrees of nature were visited on one tribe of the human species,—if Providence had spoken, like the ministers of our country, 'these blessings are very well for others, but they are too good for *your meridian*,' I fear that the tribe so cast off would turn to execration;—and till Providence shall

mark its divine displeasure by inflicting some visible opprobrious distinction on the people of Ireland, confirming the argument of their minister, and denoting its intention to degrade us, I must to such logic remain a disbeliever. It was once in this country, 'equal fate and equal freedom,' the still is now changed a little,—equal fate, i. e. equal fall, but inferior freedom—inferior freedom and superior profligacy."

Mr. Grattan then alluded to the case of Lord Charlemont, whose character is drawn in beautiful colours. For years past he had been Governor of the county of Armagh; but Lord Westmoreland, dissatisfied with the popular part he took, had joined Lord Gosford in the commission, in consequence of which Lord Charlemont resigned.

"We see with astonishment, and in it we blush for the abortive efforts of national spirit, the mortifying insignificance of public opinions, and the degrading contempt into which the people of your country have fallen. We see your old General, who led you to your constitution, marched off, dismissed by your ministry as unfit to be trusted with the government of a county,—the cockade of government struck from his hat. That man, whose accomplishments gave a grace to your cause, and whose patriotism gave a credit to your nobles,—whom the rabble itself could not see without veneration, as if they beheld something not only good, but sacred,—the man who, drooping and faint when you began your struggles, forgot his infirmity, and found in the recovery of your Constitution a vital principle added to his own;—the man, who, smit with the eternal love of fame and freedom, carried the people's standard till he planted it on the citadel of freedom;—see him dismissed from Government for those very virtues, and by that very ministry for whose continuance you are to thank the King;—see him overwhelmed at once with the adoration of his country, and the displeasure of her Ministers. The history of nations is oftentimes a farce. What is the history of that nation, that, having at the hazard of everything dear in a free Constitution, obtained its mistress, banishes the champion, and commits the honour of the lady to the care of the ravisher? There was a time when the vault of liberty could hardly contain the flight of your pinion; some of you went forth like a giant rejoicing in his strength; and you stand like elves at the door of your own Pandemonium.

The armed youth of the country, like a thousand streams thundered from a thousand hills, and filled the plain with the congregated waters, in whose mirror was seen for a moment the watery image of the British Constitution. The waters subside, the torrents cease, the rill ripples within its own bed, and the boys and children of the village paddle in the brook."

Alluding to the Barren Land Bill, which the law-officer of the Crown had pronounced to be an excellent measure, but which had been abandoned by the Government to please the bench of Bishops, Mr. Grattan introduced a remarkable panegyric on Mr. Kirwan, one of the most distinguished and eloquent of Irish preachers.

"I congratulate the church on its alliance with the Ministers of the Crown: but let me assure them it will not serve their promotion. They live under an administration which has but two principles of promotion for church, or law, or anything,—English recommendation, and Irish corruption. What is the case of Doctor Kirwan? That man preferred this country and our religion, and brought to both a genius superior to what he found in either; he called forth the latent virtues of the human heart, and taught men to discover in themselves a mine of charity, of which the proprietors had been unconscious. In feeding the lamp of charity,* he had almost exhausted the lamp of life. He comes to interrupt the repose of the pulpit, and shakes one world with the thunder of the other;—the preacher's

* Collected for the female orphans at charity sermons preached by the Rev. Walter Kirwan, Dean of Killala.

	£	s.	d.
April, 1792, at St. Anne's Church . .	752	16	11
1793, at St. Peter's . . .	812	4	11
1794, Ditto	718	5	5
March, 1796, Ditto	1014	0	0
1798, Ditto	900	5	0
1799, Ditto	788	5	0
May, 1801, Ditto	884	16	6
1803, Ditto	1003	4	6
1804, Ditto	749	10	8
1805, Ditto	633	9	0
E. LATOUCHE.	£8257	4	6

This document came from this excellent lady, who interested herself so much in this charity, and who set so good an example in Ireland.

desk becomes the throne of light; around him a train, not such as crouch and swagger at the levees of princes, (horse, foot, and dragoons,) but that wherewith a great genius peoples his own state, — charity in action, and vice in humiliation; vanity, arrogance, and pride, appalled by the rebuke of the preacher, and cheated for a moment of their native improbity. What reward? St. Nicholas within, or St. Nicholas without!!* The curse of Swift is upon him,—to have been born an Irishman, and to have used his talents for the good of his country! Had this man, instead of being the brightest of preachers, been the dullest of lawyers; had he added to dullness venality; had he aggravated the crime of venality, and sold his vote, he had been a judge: or had he been born a blockhead, bred a slave, and trained up in a great English family, and handed over as a household circumstance to the Irish viceroy, he would have been an Irish bishop, and an Irish peer, with a great patronage, perhaps a borough, and had returned members to vote against Ireland; and the Irish parochial clergy must have adored his stupidity, and deified his dullness. But under the present system, *Ireland is not the element in which a native genius can rise, unless he sells that genius to the Court, and atones, by* THE APOSTACY OF HIS CONDUCT, FOR THE CRIME OF HIS NATIVITY."

The conclusion of this memorable speech shews the idea Mr. Grattan entertained of the Government, and the impression on his mind that their intention was to abolish the Irish Parliament. He adds—

"The people of this country suppose that England acceded to their liberties, and they were right; but the present Ministry have sent the curse after that blessing:—hear the curse!—'You have got rid of the British Parliament, but we will buy the Irish; you have shaken off our final judicature, but we will sell yours; you have got your free trade, but we will make your own parliament suffer our monopolists in one quarter of the globe to exclude you, and you shall remain content with the right, destitute of the possession. Your corporate rights shall be attacked, and you shall not stir. The freedom of your press, and the personal freedom of the subject shall be outraged, and you shall not arraign. Your city shall be put under con-

* Two poor Dublin parishes.

tribution to corrupt its magistracy, and pay a guard to neglect and insult her. The seats of justice shall be purchased by personal servitude, and the qualification of your judges shall be to have borne their suffrage and testimony against the people. Taxes shall be drawn from the poor by various artifices to buy the rich. Your bills, like your people, shall be sold. You shall see the genius of your country neglected, her patriotism dismissed from commission, and the old enemies of your constitution made the rulers of the realm."

CHAPTER III.

Roman Catholic Bill of 1792, proposed by Sir Hercules Langrishe, supported by Mr. Hobart the secretary—Catholic resolutions—Mr. Richard Burke—His petition, and character—Conduct towards Mr. Egan—Protestant petitions in favour of the Catholics—Mr. Grattan's description of Protestant ascendancy—Mr. Latouche moves the rejection of the Protestant and Catholic petition—The Bill passes—Violent debates—Mr. Napper Tandy's quarrel with Mr. Toler—Question of privilege—Mr. Tandy's trial and acquittal—Speaker Foster's speech—Prosperous state of the country—Declaration of the Catholics—Circular letter of Committee—Corporation and Grand Jury instigated to address against the Catholics—Opinion of lawyers on the legality of the Convention—Meeting at Mr. Forbes's—Mr. Grattan's letters to Mr. M'Can and Mr. Berwick—His interview with the Prince of Wales and Mr. Pitt—Their opinion of the Catholics—Convention meet and send their petition to the King by their own delegates—Their correspondence with the Minister—Character of Mr. Keogh—Opinion of Edmund Burke.

The year 1792 opened auspiciously for the Roman Catholics. The advice that the Opposition had given them not to make their case a party question, was attended with good consequences, inasmuch as the Minister came forward in their support; and when Sir Hercules Langrishe, on the 25th of January, moved for leave to bring in a bill to remove certain restraints and disabilities under which they laboured, Mr. Hobart, the Secretary, got up and seconded his motion. This was a great point gained by the Catholics, and which probably ensured their success.

Sir Hercules recapitulated the measures passed in their favour. The first (rather singular in its nature) was in 1774, when the Legislature *gratified the Roman Catholics* by giving them an opportunity to testify their allegiance* *by framing an*

* Though the legislature imposed the oaths, such was the neglect at the office in keeping them, that the greatest delay and difficulty occurred when the Catholics afterwards were obliged to prove their qualification.

oath for them. In 1778 they granted them some substantial concessions as to the purchase of property. In 1782, further concessions were made; a liberal policy then gained the ascendant; the system of severity which before was considered prudent, was then looked on as unjust, and they directly acquired the power of purchasing land, which in 1778 had been granted imperfectly: they obtained the rights of property, and a free exercise of their religion.

Sir Hercules expressed his regret at the conduct pursued at their public meetings, and the exhortations not to be satisfied until everything was conceded, which he considered would alienate their friends and not advance their cause. They had, however, come forward* to vindicate them-

Dublin, 4th February, 1792.

* General Committee of Roman Catholics, Edward Byrne, Esq., in the Chair.

Resolved, that this committee having been informed, that reports have been circulated that the application of the Catholics for relief go to unlimited and total emancipation; and that attempts have been made wickedly and falsely to instil into the minds of the Protestants of this kingdom an opinion that our applications were preferred in a tone of menace; that as it appears that several Protestant gentlemen have expressed great satisfaction on being individually informed of the real extent of our applications, and our respectful manner of applying for relief; have assured us, that nothing could have excited jealousy, or apparent opposition to us, from our Protestant countrymen, but the above mentioned misapprehensions.

That we therefore deem it necessary to declare, that the whole of our late applications, whether to his Majesty's Ministers, to men in power, or to private members of the legislature, as well as our intended petition, neither did nor does contain anything, or extend further, either in substance or in principle, than the four following objects.

1st. Admission to the profession and practice of the law.

2d. Capacity to serve in county magistracies.

3d. A right to be summoned and to serve on grand and petty juries.

4th. The right of voting in counties only, for Protestant members of Parliament; in such a manner, however, as that a Roman Catholic freeholder should not vote unless he either rented and cultivated a farm of 20*l.* per annum, in addition to his forty shillings freehold, or else possessed a freehold to the amount of twenty pounds a-year.

That, in our opinion, these applications not extending to any other objects than the above, are moderate and absolutely necessary for our general alleviation, and more particularly for the protection of the

selves from misrepresentation, and disclaimed every thing that tended to interrupt public tranquillity, and expressed confidence in the liberality of Parliament. He stated that this was a subject he had taken up in his youth, and that he would not cast off in his old age. He wished that Catholic and Protestant should become one people, which they would do in time, unless intemperance retarded their progress, and revived the prejudices which so long kept them asunder.

The Bill opened to them the profession of the law as far as the rank of King's Counsel, on their taking the oath of the 13th and 14th of the King; it allowed their intermarriage with Protestants; repealing the Act of William the Third, and Second of Anne; it removed the obstructions to art and manufactures from limiting the number of apprentices, and it restored to them education, repealing the seventh of William III., and permitting teaching schools without asking leave of the ordinary of the diocese.

Sir Hercules Langrishe deserved the highest praise for his conduct on this occasion, but he did not receive justice, nor was he thanked as he merited. He attempted the most difficult thing in politics; he opposed the court, and he opposed the

Catholic farmers and the peasantry of Ireland; and that they do not, in any degree, endanger either Church or State, or endanger the security of the Protestant ascendancy.

That we never had an idea or thought so extravagant as that of menacing or intimidating our Protestant brethren, much less the legislature; and that we disclaim the violent and turbulent intentions imputed to us in some of the public prints, and circulated in private conversation.

That we refer to the known disposition of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, to our dutiful behaviour during a long series of years, and particularly to the whole tenor of our late proceedings for a full refutation of every charge of sedition and disloyalty.

That for the more ample and detailed exposure of all the evil reports and calumnies circulated against us, an Address to our Protestant fellow subjects, and to the Public in general, be printed by the order, and in the name of, the general committee.

country, and he did both with success. Situated as Ireland was, the object he gained was of great importance.

Nevertheless, limited as the relief was, and inadequate as a national measure to meet the wants and wishes of the people, there was a strong party in the House opposed to the question; for it was very easy to excite angry passions and kindle the spirit of discord in an assembly among whose members the old leaven of Protestant ascendancy had not yet subsided. Accordingly, Mr. Cuffe, member for Mayo, expressed his determination to defend the establishment in Church and State, and to uphold the principles of the Revolution. He praised the conduct of Lord Kenmare, and the sixty-eight individuals who had signed the petition addressed to the Lord Lieutenant; he censured the Catholics who had appointed delegates to attend the committee; he censured their English agent, (Mr. Burke,) and stated that House should not be intimidated by either.

This seemed to be the signal to the high church party, and was an index of their intention. Mr. O'Hara then presented a petition on behalf of the Catholics, which had been prepared by Mr. Richard Burke; and with a view perhaps of complimenting this individual or his composition, he represented it as his petition rather than that of the Catholics, of which advantage was immediately taken, the proceeding being quite unparliamentary; and the petition was accordingly withdrawn.*

Mr. Richard Burke, who was behind the Speaker's chair, now came forward into the body of the House, on which a cry arose of "Take him into

* Mr. Gifford, in his Life of Pitt, states, that the petition was so improper, and couched in such offensive language, that it would not be received. He is quite in error here, as in many other of his invidious allusions to Ireland.

custody!" He got off, however, and avoided the Sergeant-at-Arms; on which Mr. Toler humorously observed, "that he had read in the English papers of some foolish petitioners who had flocked to St. James's with a statement of their grievances, and that a most violent petition was presented to the House of Commons, but it luckily missed fire, and the villains made off."

Another circumstance connected with this petition was rather humorous:—Mr. Richard Burke had acted as agent to the Catholic committee during the year 1791 and to July 1792. For these services it was stated that he received upwards of 2,000 guineas from the Catholics. His father's name and advice, and the influence he had in England, were the son's best recommendations. He had been spoiled by Mr. Burke, who greatly overrated his abilities; for he was vain and conceited, and wanted temper and modesty. It was said that he governed his father most despotically, a singular circumstance, but which happens sometimes where men of talent are found to give way to feelings of relationship, and sacrifice to weaker understandings. He used to attend the meetings of the Opposition at Leinster House, and one evening, coming in late, and rather flushed after dinner, he gave the party a long string of resolutions, which he did not take the trouble of reading to the meeting, but in an authoritative manner desired, that they should be presented to the House; but he had only one request to make, which was that Mr. Egan might not be allowed to open his lips on the subject, or interfere at all in the business. Mr. Egan was present; he was a good natured, honest, warm-hearted man,—rough in manner and grotesque in appearance; a courageous character, very hot, and full of anger. His brains (so to speak) lay in his veins. He loved even the man

whom he attacked; and though he said coarse things, he did not in reality mean them, or intend either injury or insult: with him abuse had become a habit,—almost his dialect.

> "If he call rogue or rascal from a garret,
> He means you no more mischief than a parrot."

On this occasion he behaved exceedingly well, and very drolly. Incensed at Mr. Burke's conduct, he stepped forward opposite to him, and said, "*Sir, with the highest reverence for your derivation, I entertain none whatever for the modesty of your vocation,*" — at the same time making him a very low bow. The party laughed heartily, and sided with Mr. Egan. It did not end, however, so well for Mr. Burke, who was so wedded to his resolutions, that he merely changed their form to that of an essay, making an argumentative and oratorical composition,—certainly clever, but by no means fit for a petition to Parliament; it accordingly met with the fate before mentioned, and was rejected by the House.*

On the 8th of February, (1792) the Right Hon. John O'Neil, member for Antrim, a Protestant county, he himself being of a high Protestant family, and one of the oldest in the country, presented a petition from 600 of the Protestant inhabitants of the town of Belfast, praying the House to repeal all the penal laws, and place Roman Catholics on the same footing as Protestants. This was received with only a single negative from Sir Boyle Roche, who stated that it ought to be "tossed over the bar, and kicked into the lobby."

On the 18th another petition was presented by Mr. O'Neil from the Protestants of the county of Antrim, in favour of concession to the Roman Catholics, but not to grant the elective franchise.

* The document will be found in the Appendix, No. III., it is long, but an able production; said to have been revised by Edmund Burke.

On the same day Mr. Egan presented a petition from the Roman Catholic committee, as well on their own behalf, as on that of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, praying for a relaxation of the penal laws, and a restoration of some share of the elective franchise, which they had enjoyed long after the revolution.* This petition was received, and Sir Hercules Langrishe's Bill was brought on; and here was the beginning of that religious war which the weakness and the folly of both parties has prolonged for upwards of forty years. The measure was supported by Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Denis Browne, Mr. Michael Smith, (afterwards Master of the Rolls,) Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Egan, Mr. George Knox, Mr. Curran, and Mr. Grattan: it was opposed by Mr. Ogle, Mr. Cuffe, Mr. Staples, Mr. Ruxton. The House then went into committee without a division, and on the 24th the Bill, with very few alterations, was passed.

On this subject Mr. Grattan was peculiarly circumstanced. His constituents were in a great degree opposed to the measure, and the Corporation of Dublin, in an address, had requested him to oppose all relief to the Catholics, and to support Protestant ascendancy. Mr. Grattan replied that it was the ministers who had attacked the ascendancy, by their attempts to corrupt the Parliamentary constitution, and establish a ministerial ascendancy in its place. He added a statement, which was, unfortunately, disregarded. "The Roman Catholics, whom I love, and the Protestants, whom I prefer, are both, I hope, too enlightened to revive religious animosities." In the debate he describes the real meaning of Protestant ascendancy, and gives a most interesting view of the two sects. The remarks are sublime

* The Roman Catholics enjoyed this right till the year 1727.

and eloquent:—one of them, it is to be hoped, will not prove prophetic:—

"Protestant ascendancy I conceive to be two-fold:—first, your superiority in relation to the Catholic;—second, your strength in relation to other objects. To be the superior sect is a necessary part, but only a part of your situation. To be a Protestant state, proud and able to guard yourself and your island against those dangers to which all states are obnoxious, is another part of your situation. In the one point of view, I consider you as a victorious sect; in the other, as the head of a growing nation; and not the first sect in a distracted land, rendered by that division a province and not a nation;—it would be my wish to unite the two situations.

"There is another danger to which, or to the fear of which, your divisions may expose the Protestant ascendancy—I mean a Union. Let me suppose the minister, as he has often proposed corrupt terms to the Protestant, should propose crafty ones to the Catholic, and should say, 'You are three-fourths of the people excluded from the blessings of an Irish constitution; accept the advantages of an English Union.' Here is a proposal, probably supported by the people of England, and rendered plausible to at least three-fourths of the people of Ireland. I mention a Union, because I have heard it has been darkly suggested as a resort of Protestant desperation against Catholic pretensions. *Never think of it.* The Protestant would be the first victim;—there would be Catholic equality and Parliamentary extinction. It would be fatal to the Catholic also;—he would not be raised, but you would be depressed, and his chance of liberty blasted for ever. It would be fatal to England, beginning with a false compromise, which they might call a Union, to end in eternal separation through the progress of two civil wars.

"I have stated three dangers to which your ascendancy is exposed; let me suggest a fourth—the intermediate state of political languor whenever the craft of the minister touches you in your religious divisions; the loss of nerve, the decay of fire, the oblivion of grievances, and the palsy of virtue; your harp unstrung of its best passions, and responsive only to notes of gratitude for injuries, and grace and thanksgiving for corruption. I conclude this part of the subject by saying, as broadly and unconditionally as words can import, that the progressive adoption of the

Roman Catholics does not surrender, but ascertains the Protestant ascendancy; or that it does not give the Catholic the power to shake the establishment of your constitution in Church or State, or property. Neither does it leave him the disposition; it gives him immunities, and it makes Catholic privileges Protestant power. I repeat the idea—and never did any more decide my head or my heart, my sense of public justice, and of public utility—I repeat the idea, that the interdict makes you two sects, and its progressive repeal makes you one people; placing you at the head of that people for ever, instead of being a sect for ever without a people, equal perhaps to coerce the Catholic, but obnoxious, both you and the Catholic, to be coerced by any other power,—the minister, if he wishes to enslave, or the enemy, if he wishes to invade you; an ill-assured settlement, unprepared to withstand those great diseases which are inseparable from the condition of nations, and may finally consume you; and in the mean time, subject to those intermitting fevers and panics which shake by fits your public zeal, and enfeeble all your determinations. I sit down reasserting my sentiments, which are, that the removal of all disabilities is necessary to make the Catholic a freeman, and the Protestant a people."

On the 20th, the House of Commons, as if repenting what had been just done, acted under the influence of those feelings which have unfortunately guided all proceedings wherever the Catholics or the country were concerned — a spirit of violence at one moment — of concession at another — praising one day — insulting the next. In this mistaken spirit, David Latouche, a privy councillor, a supporter of Government, a person commanding respect and veneration, but who belonged to a French refugee family, and seemed alive even then to the sufferings of the Huguenots, proposed that the Catholic petition, which had been received with only one dissentient voice, and the Belfast petition, that had lain on the table for near a fortnight, should now be rejected.

This produced a violent debate. The demand

of the elective franchise increased the support which Mr. Latouche obtained; and, singular to say, this privilege, which had been exercised for near forty years after the Revolution, was represented by the pretended champions of that great event, as forming part of the settlement, and a principal prop of Protestant ascendancy! Messrs. Brownlow, Ponsonby, and Bushe, were found among the supporters of Mr. Latouche; together with Beresford, Ogle, Loftus, Maxwell, Toler (Solicitor-general), and Sir Edward Newenham. They were opposed by Forbes, Egan, Hutchinson, Smith, Curran, Hardy, and Grattan. On a division, the numbers were—208 to 25 against the petition.

This debate was conducted with great violence and asperity. Mr. Toler (Solicitor-general) was peculiarly virulent. The bitterest feelings seemed to be set loose; insult and contumely cast on one party; ascendancy and tyranny upheld by the other. In referring to these times, Mr. Grattan used to say, that "I could hardly obtain a hearing. As to Denis Browne, (who always supported the Catholics,) he could not be heard at all;—they would not listen to him. I spoke against the sense, Browne against the noise of the House, and he was abused, insulted, and covered with reproaches."

Such was the account given by the chief actor in these scenes; and what a melancholy picture of a misled and misgoverned people! The consequence was natural, for this violent spirit operates two ways;—it forces one man to wish the slave out of the world; and the other, the tyrant. Mr. Grattan's remarks on the Revolution are worthy of attention:—

"The Revolution has been much insisted on and much misunderstood. Gentlemen speak of the Revolution as

the measure and limits of our liberty. The Revolution in Ireland was followed by two events — the loss of trade, and the loss of freedom to the Protestants; and the cause of such losses was our religious animosity. It was not attended by the loss of the elective franchise to the Papist. If then the Revolution is the common measure of the condition of both sects, two extraordinary results would follow—that the Protestants should not recover their trade or freedom, and that the Catholics should not lose their franchise; but the virtue of the Revolution in Ireland was its principles, which were for a century checked in this country, but which did at last exert themselves, and inspire you to re-establish your liberty, and must at last prompt you to communicate a share of that liberty to the rest of the Irish. The Revolution in Ireland, properly understood, is a great and salient principle of freedom; as misunderstood, it is a measure and entail of bondage.

"The part of the subject which I shall now press upon you is the final and eternal doom to which some gentlemen propose to condemn the Catholic. Some have said they must never get the elective franchise. What! never be free? 3,000,000 of your people condemned by their fellow-subjects to an everlasting slavery, in all changes of time, decay of prejudice, increase of knowledge, the fall of Papal power, and the establishment of philosophic and moral ascendancy in its place. Never be free! do you mean to tell the Roman Catholic, it is in vain you take oaths and declarations of allegiance; it would be in vain even to renounce the spiritual power of the Pope, and become like any other Dissenter;—it will make no difference as to your emancipation. Go to France—go to America—carry your property, industry, manufactures, and family, to a land of liberty. This is a sentence which requires the power of a God, and the malignity of a demon. You are not competent to pronounce it;—believe me, you may as well plant your foot on the earth, and hope by that resistance to stop the diurnal revolution which advances you to that morning sun which is to shine alike on the Protestant and the Catholic, as you can hope to arrest the progress of that other light—reason and justice—which approach to liberate the Catholic and liberalize the Protestant. Even now the question is on its way, and making its destined and irresistible progress,—

which you, with all your authority, will have no power to resist, no more than any other great truth, or any great ordinance of nature, or any law of nations, which mankind is free to contemplate, but cannot resist. There is a justice linked to their cause, and a truth that sets off their application."

The House of Commons having involved itself in one difficulty by the rejection of the Protestant and Roman Catholic petitions, was led by the officers of the crown to involve itself with the people on another question—that of the privileges of Parliament. In the debate on the 20th of February, the Solicitor-general, (Mr. Toler,) indulging in one of his usual humorous sallies, criticised rather too severely, the character as well as the person of Mr. Napper Tandy, upon which the latter demanded an explanation, which the Solicitor-general refused to give, and appealed to the House. The House declared it a breach of privilege, and ordered Mr. Tandy to be arrested. The Speaker issued his warrant, but Mr. Tandy escaped from the custody of the officer, upon which the House applied to the Lord-lieutenant to issue a proclamation for his apprehension, and directed the officers of the crown to prosecute him.

Thus, by the misconduct of Mr. Toler, and the imprudence of the law officers, they got involved in two difficulties. To extricate themselves from the first, they were obliged to appeal to the Lord-lieutenant; and to extricate themselves from the second, they were obliged to appeal to a jury of their country. Having thus laid the privileges of the Commons at the feet of the executive magistrate, they fled for redress to the people whom they had insulted.

The business ended, like most of the matters entrusted to Mr. Toler, in a complete farce. Mr.

Tandy avoided the arrest, surrendered himself a few hours before Parliament was prorogued—was brought to the bar; defied the House—refused to answer their questions; was committed to prison, accompanied by crowds of his anxious fellow-citizens, and immediately after was liberated. His trial then came on; the Government prosecuted him for sending a hostile message to Mr. Toler; they failed in proving their case, and Mr. Tandy was triumphantly acquitted.

The East India trade again occupied the attention of Parliament. As Ireland could not trade directly to the East Indies, she was obliged to pay dearer for India goods coming through England, than if she traded directly to those regions. Accordingly, Mr. Ponsonby moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the laws which prevented the trade of Ireland eastward of the Cape of Good Hope; but his motion was unsuccessful.

On presenting the money bills for the royal assent, the Speaker, Mr. Foster, stated in his speech, that the successful measures taken to prevent the increase of the national debt, was one great cause of the extension of trade, agriculture, and manufactures, which, with a rapid and uninterrupted progress, raised the kingdom to a state of prosperity and wealth never experienced before. Mr. Foster was so far right; for Ireland had certainly increased of late in a remarkable and unprecedented manner. The years 1791, 1792 and 1793, were nearly her most flourishing periods, both as to trade and revenue. Her debt had not increased from 1787 to 1792, and at this latter period only amounted to 1,718,224*l.* and her revenue in this year amounted nearly to two millions. Her exports (official value) had increased from 3,779,570*l.* in 1785, to 5,387,760*l.*

in 1792.* In the item of linens, the export had increased from fourteen millions of yards in 1781, to forty-five millions in 1792. Her agriculture, manufactures, and industry had made great and surprising advances since the period of the revolution of 1782.

The concluding part, however, of this speech was marked by that narrow spirit which, unfortunately, swayed Mr. Foster during the whole of his life, and was so ill suited to a country, the majority of whose people were of the Catholic persuasion. He stated that "on the provisions for securing a Protestant Parliament depended the Protestant ascendancy, and with it the continuance of the many blessings they enjoyed."

For this speech, Mr. Hobart, the Secretary, moved the thanks of the House, and passed a marked eulogium on Mr. Foster—a questionable mode of shewing to the Catholics the sincerity of his attachment to their cause. On the 18th of April, 1792, the session concluded, and Parliament was prorogued.

The rejection of the Catholic Petition had been immediately followed up by a vote of thanks from the Corporation of Dublin to the majority of 210 who had voted against the extension of the right of elective franchise to the Catholics. This body, who rested their title upon a charter of James the Second, formed, nevertheless, a most exclusive party. As private individuals, many of them were respectable; but as a public assembly, they were wholly unfit to interfere in politics, particularly where religion was concerned; and it is very probable that they would have remained quiescent had they not been excited by the Castle. Upon

* In 1795, her revenue amounted to 1,931,461*l.*; and in 1796, to 2,256,621*l.* The five items were Customs, Excise, Carriage-duty, Hearth-money, and Stamps.

this, the Roman Catholics, adopting the suggestion thrown out by their Protestant friends at the meeting in Belfast, and following the example of a large portion of the English Roman Catholics, published a formal declaration* of their opinions

* Declaration of the Catholics of Ireland in a General Committee.
Dublin, March 17th, 1792.

Whereas certain opinions and principles, inimical to good order and government, have been attributed to the Catholics, the existence of which we utterly deny; and, whereas, it is at this time peculiarly necessary to renounce such imputations, and to give the most full and ample satisfaction to our Protestant brethren, that we hold no principle whatsoever, incompatible with our duty as men or as subjects, or repugnant to liberty, whether political, civil, or religious.

Now, we, the Catholics of Ireland, for the removal of all such imputations, and in deference to the opinion of many respectable bodies of men, and individuals among our Protestant brethren, do hereby, in the face of our country, of all Europe, and before God, make this our deliberate and solemn declaration :—

1. We abjure, disavow, and condemn the opinion, that princes, excommunicated by the Pope and Council, or by any ecclesiastical authority whatsoever, may therefore be deposed or murdered by their subjects, of any other persons. We hold such doctrine in detestation, as wicked and impious; and we declare we do not believe, that either the Pope, with or without a general Council, or any prelate or priest, or any ecclesiastical power whatsoever, can absolve the subjects of this kingdom, or any of them, from their allegiance to his Majesty King George the Third, who is, by authority of Parliament, the lawful King of this realm.

2. We abjure, condemn, and detest, as unchristian and impious, the principle, that it is lawful to murder, destroy, or any ways injure any person whatsoever, for or under the pretence of their being heretics;—and we declare solemnly before God, that we believe that no act in itself, unjust, immoral, or wicked, can ever be justified or excused by, or under pretence or colour, that it was done either for the good of the church, or in obedience to any ecclesiastical power whatsoever.

3. We further declare, that we hold it as an unchristian and impious principle, that "no faith is to be kept with heretics." This doctrine we detest and reprobate, not only as contrary to our religion, but as destructive of morality, of society, and even of common honesty; and it is our firm belief that an oath made to any person, not of the Catholic religion, is equally binding, as if it were made to any Catholic whatsoever.

4. We have been charged with holding as an article of our belief, that the Pope, with or without the authority of a general council, or that certain ecclesiastical powers can acquit and absolve us, before God, from our oath of allegiance, or even from the just oaths and contracts entered into between man and man:

Now, we do utterly renounce, abjure, and deny that we hold or maintain any such belief, as being contrary to the peace and happiness of society, inconsistent with morality, and above all, repugnant to the true spirit of the Catholic religion.

and principles as connected with the civil and religious liberty of the subject.

The General Committee shortly after issued a circular letter to the Catholics of Ireland,

5. We do further declare, that we do not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, state, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any temporal or civil jurisdiction, power, superiority, or pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm.

6. After what we have renounced, it is immaterial, in a political light, what may be our opinion or faith in other points respecting the Pope. However, for greater satisfaction, we declare, that it is not an article of the Catholic faith, neither are we thereby required to believe or profess "that the Pope is infallible," or that we are bound to obey any order, in its own nature immoral, though the Pope, or any ecclesiastical power, should issue or direct such order; but, on the contrary, we hold, that it would be sinful in us to pay any respect or obedience thereto.

7. We further declare, that we do not believe that any sin whatsoever committed by us can be forgiven at the mere will of any Pope, or of any priest, or of any person or persons whatsoever; but that sincere sorrow for past sins, a firm and sincere resolution, as far as may be in our power, to restore our neighbour's property or character, if we have trespassed on, or unjustly injured either; a firm and sincere resolution to avoid future guilt, and to atone to God, are previous and indispensable requisites to establish a well-founded expectation of forgiveness; and that any person who receives absolution without these previous requisites, so far from obtaining thereby any remission of his sins, incurs the additional guilt of violating a sacrament.

8. We do hereby solemnly disclaim, and for ever renounce all interest in, and title to, all forfeited lands resulting from any rights, or supposed rights of our ancestors, or any claim, title, or interest therein; nor do we admit any title, as a foundation of right, which is not established and acknowledged by the laws of the realm, as they now stand. We desire, further, that whenever the patriotism, liberality, and justice of our countrymen, shall restore to us a participation in the elective franchise, no Catholic shall be permitted to vote at any election for members to serve in parliament, unless he shall previously take an oath to defend, to the utmost of his power, the arrangement of property in this country, as established by the different acts of attainder and settlement.

9. It has been objected to us, that we wish to subvert the present church establishment for the purpose of substituting a Catholic establishment in its stead. Now we do here disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure any such intention; and further, if we shall be admitted into any share of the constitution, by our being restored to the right of elective franchise, we are ready, in the most solemn manner to declare, that we will not exercise that privilege to disturb and weaken the establishment of the Protestant religion, or Protestant Government in this country.

Signed by order and on behalf of the General Committee of the Catholics of Ireland,

EDWARD BYRNE, Chairman.
RICHARD M'CORMICK, Secretary.

calling upon them to appoint delegates from each county, and all the great cities, to form an enlarged committee, directing them as to the mode of appointment, and recommending that they should be instructed to petition the King, and ask for the elective franchise, and equal participation in the benefits of the trial by jury.

This letter roused the feelings of the ascendancy party, and every exertion was made by Government to oppose the project. The Corporations and the grand juries were appealed to; Lord Clare's party in Limerick; Mr. Foster and his family in Lowth; the Beresfords in Londonderry—all co-operated with the grand juries in passing resolutions against the Catholics and their projected plan of delegation. Carlow, Mayo, Monaghan, Longford, Cork, Limerick, Wexford, Cavan, Fermanagh, Roscommon, Leitrim, Meath, Londonderry, Armagh, Louth, were the chief counties from whence grand jury addresses were forwarded; but it was Limerick that gave the tone to the rest.

In consequence of these proceedings, the subcommittee of the Catholics drew up a case for counsel,* who gave it as their opinion that the proposed plan was perfectly legal and constitutional. The Committee also published a declaration† in reply to the grand jury addresses, and voted thanks to their Protestant friends for their support. The addresses were, in general, violent, illiberal, and intemperate; fatal to the peace of the country, and injurious to the character of the Government, who by these sinister and unworthy arts excited the people, just as they were disposed to coalesce, and to forget past animosities; they set both parties—Protestant and Catholic—at war against each other, and shewed *that they*

* See Appendix IV. † See Appendix V.

could only command their divisions, but not their allegiance.

The body that sprung from these proceedings was the celebrated Catholic Convention of 1793. Mr. Grattan considered it advisable, and strongly recommended it, knowing also that if the Catholics had been admitted to Parliament, a reform would soon have followed. It was a necessary, but a *strong* measure; for conventions, like revolutions, should be resorted to sparingly; and it is necessity alone that can justify them. This one originated at a meeting held at Mr. Forbes's, in Kildare-street. Mr. George Ponsonby, Mr. Hutchinson, (Lord Donoughmore), Mr. Grattan, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Keogh, Mr. Edmund Byrne, and some others, were present. The Catholics were frightened at the proposed measure, and would hardly attempt it. Hutchinson was very bold; Forbes was decided; Keogh was timid. The party had some trouble in persuading them to come forward; but the opinion of the meeting was so strong in favour of holding a convention, that at length the Catholics were brought to agree to it.

Shortly afterwards Mr. Grattan went to England, and was fortunate enough to be in London at the time the Delegates from the Convention arrived there. He had then an opportunity of removing some false impressions, and unjust charges which had been brought against his countrymen, in order to prejudice the mind of the British Government, and of the King—a course of proceeding which was practised with too much success a few years afterwards.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. MR. BERWICK.

Bray, 14*th Aug.* 1792.

My Dear Sir,

I am very happy at your arrival, and more so at the pro-

mise you have made me,* but don't forget to accomplish it. Persuade Hardy he is indolent, and we'll rouse him. Mrs. Grattan has not been well, but I hope is getting better. I see the truth of your observation on Burke's last book.† From the extract he seems much wounded, much inflamed,—beset,—forsaken. 'Tis a pity. 'Twas difficult not to foresee such a situation. Yours, most truly,

H. GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. BERWICK.

Harrowgate, Oct. 13th, 1792.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hope soon to see you, I think, much better than when we left Ireland. Mrs. Grattan has not yet recovered her strength, but is so much better that I have no fears about her. She is much obliged to you for your kind enquiries. In your letter you mention an event which I began to despair of—the amendment of Mrs. Hardy; it is to him spirit and exertion, and to the House of Commons good speeches, which I hope he will make next session, otherwise we shall go wild instead of Mrs. Hardy. I hear no Irish politics but from the papers, which contain not much. The parade of the Volunteers on the acceptance of the French constitution must annoy the Government very much—they brought it on themselves. We are to meet the 4th, I hope in numbers, at the Whig Club,‡ whose button attracts the observation of some here, being very large, and they think mysterious, where more is meant than meets the eye.

Here I get very little of politics. Peace and submission towards Russia. Expense and anxiety in the Mysore. The accounts about the latter are not so favourable as the former were, or the next must be, otherwise 'twill be for England, 'tis thought, a bad war.

I know nothing about home, not having heard from them these three weeks; but I hope that all are alive and well. I have heard nothing about Forbes,—where is he? or how is he? But M'Can wrote to me from Ireland some time ago, and gave no bad account; from thence I argue he is well; but the existence of him and our chil-

* To visit him, and confer on some public matter.

† Letters on the French Revolution.

‡ Mr. Grattan generally wore the Whig Club dress — blue and buff, with a large gilt button having on it the harp surmounted by the Irish crown.

dren is all in logical conclusion, our servant having omitted to write. I hope all in your house is well. I hear Lord Moira is not. Yours, ever,

H. GRATTAN.

SAME TO SAME.

London, Oct. 25th, 1792.

Many thanks, my dear Sir, for your kind letter, though I cannot sufficiently lament the unfortunate ferment it relates to. I get no intelligence nor information save what you, and in a short letter, Hardy, was so kind as to send. Do be so good as to let me know the state of things in Ireland. What are the Catholics doing,—or are they doing any thing more than the election of their deputies? They talk here of their being armed!—is that the fact? I wish you would tell some of them in whom you have confidence, that they are much misrepresented, and that the people here are persuaded that they are on the eve of a rebellion. It is of great consequence to them that they should publish, and publish *here* a declaration of their sentiments, and temperate narrative of their proceedings. Thinking, as I do, very well of their intentions, and *believing them to be studiously misrepresented in this country, and perhaps to persons in power,* such a step seems very necessary for those persons who are the principal men of their persuasion, and who direct their conduct, to advise them to.

I am glad Mrs. Hardy is better. I have seen nobody since I came to London, but before I leave it, possibly may. I have been confined by Mrs. Grattan, who is now, I think, recovered. I have now, and not until *now,* no fears about her. She got Hardy's letter. Hardy, that fat, lazy, studious, postponing fellow. I'll break his wind when I go back, and make him ascend greater heights* than ever. Yours, most truly,

H. GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

London, Nov. 6th, 1792.

MY DEAR M'CAN,

I am glad the work is in hand, for our manufacturers are as good as any in any country, when properly encouraged.

* At the back of Tinnehinch House rose a steep hill, from whence there was a beautiful prospect of the Dargle and Powerscourt valley, one of Mr. Grattan's favourite walks with Mr. Hardy.

We are likely to stay here three weeks or a month longer. Mrs. Grattan is much better. I am, and so is she, much obliged to you for your kind inquiry. Write to me the news regularly, if you have time. Is there any truth about throwing troops into Ireland? What do the Catholics intend? Yours, H. G.

SAME TO SAME.

London, 16*th Nov.*, 1792.

My Dear M'Can,

I am very thankful to you for your letters, as is Mrs. G. for your kind inquiries. She is certainly much better. I am very anxious to be informed of what happens in Ireland.

Is that work to go on?* You see how material it is that it should. It cannot wait for my coming to Ireland, for that will be entirely too late.

My love to all friends; here, they are very anxious about the affairs of the Continent, and somewhat inquisitive about Ireland. I am assured *some persons in the Ministry of Ireland (or well connected), on this subject, have represented the Catholics as in a state of rebellion*, probably to get the English to assist in crushing them, in which, I believe, our Irish machinators will fail. Yours ever,

H. G.

SAME TO SAME.

22*nd Nov.*, 1792.

Dear M'Can,

I got your letter of the 17th, and I also got the newspapers and the debates. I shall not return these three weeks. I wish much that† business should be done soon, otherwise it will be too late.

I imagine the Ministry will strike to the Roman Catholics. The present state of Europe, and the likelihood of a Dutch war, will secure to the Catholics their own terms. I wish you would learn for me the progress of the negotiation.

I see the paper mentions the Volunteers are reviving—how is that fact? I see in the papers paragraphs respect-

* This was a vindication of the conduct and principles of the Catholics from the charges made against them by the grand juries: it was published by order of the committee in December. It had been read to Mr. Grattan and Mr. Hardy, who recommended them to be firm, but moderate in language.

† The Vindication.

ing Reform — is that question in any progress? Answer me to these particulars as soon as you can. I am very anxious. Yours ever, H. G.

SAME TO SAME.

London, Dec. 7, 1792.

Thank you exceedingly. I shall return, notwithstanding the story you mention; nothing but being drowned will prevent my being in Ireland some weeks before Parliament sits. I have some reasons for wishing to stay here a little longer—my wife's health, which is mending, but not in a perfect state; the sitting of Parliament here, which I wish to attend. *I wish also to have an opportunity of correcting several false reports and misinformations regarding the Catholics. I have had an opportunity of removing prejudices,* and all I now converse with are for them. *They must avoid republican principles and French politics. The situation of France may give them strength; but its proceedings must never be an example.* What you mention touching Reform, as coming from Ponsonby,* is very interesting. I wish to be more particularly informed on that subject. Tell me more of his sentiments,—also of Curran's. Would they or either write to me.

The pamphlet you mention I long much to see; probably I shall get it in a post or two. Has it any run, or any real merit? There is no coalition, I believe, between Fox and Pitt. Much debating is expected on Thursday;† the Ministry are said to be weak. Write to me as soon as you can. Our friend John‡ is to be in town to-day.

I am d—d sorry they have omitted the crown§ in the harp; depend upon it, the crown is very essential to our prosperity, though I wish the Ministers of the Crown in Ireland were changed. It is supposed there must be a change of men and measures. Yours truly,

HENRY GRATTAN.

This last letter is interesting, not only on account of the advice which it gave the Roman Catholics, but from the evidence it affords of Mr.

* His intentions to propose it in the approaching session.

† The day on which the English parliament was opened.

‡ John Forbes.

§ A military association formed in Dublin; their device was a Harp without a crown, surmounted by the Cap of Liberty.

Grattan's sentiments. The passage which mentions "*the Irish machinators*" alludes to the following circumstance. Mr. Foster, who was unfortunately full of prejudice and hostile to the Catholics, had sent to England a list of individuals who had lost their lives in some of the riots and robberies that had occurred in the county of Down. Their names were marked "*Protestants*," and opposite to them was a note—"*Killed by a Catholic*." These riots had arisen between the defenders and the opposite party, who were Protestants.

This mischievous document was sent to the Prince of Wales, and he was requested to lay it before the King. Mr. Grattan and Mr. Forbes had an interview with him at that time, by appointment. The Prince was then friendly to the Irish, and, according to Mr. Grattan's account, kept him and Mr. Forbes waiting very long. At length, when he appeared, he made a speech on the subject of the Catholics and their Convention, all of which he seemed to have previously studied. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas (Lord Melville) were there. Mr. Grattan described the Prince as professing himself friendly to the measure, saying that "he was a lover of Ireland, and would support the Catholics." He spoke well, and was very animated; and at the conclusion, he slapped most violently a very tight pair of yellow leather breeches which he wore, acting this part with much address and spirit, and adding, with great animation, that he had seen letters from the north of Ireland respecting the riots which had occurred there; that the names of the persons were marked "Protestant," "Killed by a Catholic," and so on; that he had been requested to give these letters to the King, but that he had declined to do so; and that they had been sent

then to the Duke of York, who had brought them to his Majesty.

Mr. Pitt was very fair in the business, and was favourable to the proposed measure; so was Mr. Dundas. He spoke as friendly towards the Catholics as Pitt did, *and, like Pitt, he subsequently opposed them*, but in the end they succeeded with the King.

Such were the circumstances that occurred at this meeting. The truth was, that the King had formerly taken up the Catholics as Anti-Americans, thinking they would support him in that war; and now that the battle of Jemappe* had been lost, he took them up as Anti-Jacobins; but soon afterwards he let them drop, and since that time he uniformly opposed them.

The Catholic Convention had assembled in Dublin on the 3rd of December, 1792. Delegates attended from all the counties and the principal cities of Ireland. The first resolution passed was "That the Catholic peers, prelates, and delegates, were the only power competent to speak the sense of the Catholics of Ireland;"—the second was "That a petition be presented to his Majesty, stating their grievances, and praying relief." It was proposed that their petition should be sent to the Lord-lieutenant for transmission, and Mr. Hutchinson opened a communication with the Castle to ascertain their sentiments. Some delay and distrust, however, occurred, and the Convention determined to send it by members of their

* This battle was fought on the 6th of November, 1792, at the village of Jemappe, between the Austrians, commanded by the Duke of Saxe-Teschen, and the republicans under the command of Dumourier. The French account represented the loss of the enemy 5,000 killed, and as many prisoners. The Duke of Chartres, then called after his father, young Egalité, (now Louis Phillipe, King of the French,) distinguished himself on this occasion, by his courage and abilities (*par sa froide valeur*). This battle decided the fate of Belgium for the French, as the battle of Neerwinden, in the year after decided it against them.

own body. Bearing in mind, probably, the conduct of the Marquis of Buckingham in 1789, and unwilling to trust another Lord-lieutenant, they appointed five delegates on the 7th of December, with instructions to present the petition to the King, stating the disabilities under which they laboured, and praying to be restored to the rights and privileges of the Constitution. No mention, however, was specifically made of seats in Parliament; but the instructions were that in any conference with the King's Ministers, they were fully to apprise them that it was the expectation as well as the wish of the Catholics of Ireland, that the penal and restrictive laws still affecting them be *totally* removed, and that nothing short of such *total* removal would satisfy the doubts and anxieties which agitated the public mind, or carry into effect his Majesty's gracious wish for the union of all his subjects in sentiment, interest, and affection.

They arrived in London a few days after Mr. Grattan had the interview with the Prince and Mr. Dundas. The latter delayed giving a direct answer to their request of a personal interview with the King. The delegates, however, evinced a determination which does them great credit, and in which they were supported by their Parliamentary friends, Messrs. Grattan, Hutchinson, Forbes, Curran, and Doyle, (afterwards Sir John Doyle,) all of whom happened fortunately to be then in London, and in particular by Lord Rawdon, (afterward Moira,) who received them with that hospitality* for which he was famed, and

* Lord Rawdon's reception (almost his support) of the French refugees, was princely, but his generosity cost him not only his fortune, but his independence. It was from the mother's side this family derived their good qualities. She was a woman of a noble mind, and possessed not only good, but great sentiments. *Her notions were those not of family, but of royal consequence.* She, however, had some that were

which, unfortunately, on other occasions, cost him so very dear. In case of a refusal by the minister, Lord Rawdon meant to avail himself of his privilege as a peer, and to have demanded an audience of His Majesty to express his opinion.

The letters of the delegates were judicious and well-advised; but, unfortunately for both countries, the suggestions they contained were not followed up, and the long-agitated and vexatious question of Catholic emancipation was left open for an indefinite time, and under circumstances most critical to the empire.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DELEGATES TO THE RIGHT HON. HENRY DUNDAS, SECRETARY OF STATE.

SIR,

We have the honour to inform you, that the Catholics of Ireland have delegated us to present their humble petition to our most gracious Sovereign. We request to know at what time we may be allowed the honour of waiting on you with a copy of the petition which we wish to be submitted to His Majesty's inspection.

We have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servants,

EDWARD BYRNE.
JOHN KEOGH.
J. E. DEVEREUX.
CHRIST. BELLEW.
SIR T. FRENCH.

Grevier's Hotel, Jermyn Street, December 19, 1792.

MR. DUNDAS TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DELEGATES.

Somerset Place, 19th December, 1792.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received your letter, and shall be at the Secretary

false, and those she entertained on the subject of the reform in Parliament were quite aristocratic.

The generosity of the family may be known by the following circumstance. On one occasion three bills came from the Prince to Lord Moira for 1,500*l.*, 5,000*l.*, and 15,000*l.*; Lord Moira endorsed them, sent them to a friend, and got the money for the Prince. His Royal Highness's letter which was read on the occasion, made great protestations of regard, and added, "*If ever I forget your kindness, may God forget me;*" on which Lady Moira made the following prophetic remark: "*If ever that man comes to the throne, he will deceive his friends.*"

of State's office to-morrow at one o'clock, ready to receive the copy of the petition you propose to submit to my perusal.—I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your most obedient and humble servant,

H. Dundas.

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS TO MR. DUNDAS.

Sir,

In justice to His Majesty, with a sense of whose paternal goodness to all his people we are thoroughly impressed, and to the Catholic people of Ireland who sent us hither, we think it our indispensable duty to state, that the unanimous sentiment of that body, after a long and solemn discussion of their affairs, was, that no measure short of an abolition of all distinctions between them and their fellow-subjects of other religious persuasions would be either just or satisfactory. We were sent here to support that opinion, and with instructions to state it fully on all occasions where it might be necessary to do so. We do therefore now, in conformity with those instructions, unanimously declare that no measure of partial relief will be esteemed satisfactory by the Catholics of Ireland; and we further declare it as our opinion, that independent of the justice of our claims—a total abolition of all distinctions now existing between the Catholics and others, His Majesty's subjects of Ireland—will be experimentally found to be the only measure capable of removing the anxieties which now exist—of insuring a permanent tranquillity to that kingdom, and of perpetuating the connexion with England, the benefits of which we deeply feel, and whose existence we are peculiarly anxious to promote.

We have also the honour to enclose for your perusal a copy of the signatures affixed to the petition of the Catholics of Ireland.—We have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

Edward Byrne, &c.

December 20th, 1792.

Sir,—In consequence of the interviews with which you honoured us on the 20th and 24th of this month, we presumed to entertain a hope that we should have been favoured by this with your determination as to the time when we should wait on you to learn the proper mode and season of presenting to his Majesty the humble petition of his loyal subjects the Catholics of Ireland, a copy of which we had the honour to leave for your inspection. We feel

it our duty respectfully to apprise you, that on again referring to our instructions, we do not conceive ourselves entrusted with any discretion or latitude, but are limited to presenting the petition to our Sovereign in person. We therefore humbly request to know at what time it may please his Majesty graciously to permit us to approach his presence, and lay at his feet the petition with which we are entrusted. And we are persuaded, sir, that you will not consider us as too urgent in requesting an immediate answer. When we suggest that ten days have now elapsed since our first application, and that we are responsible to those by whom we are deputed for our using all due diligence in endeavouring to obtain the object of our mission.

We have the honour, &c.,

December 29, 1792. E. B., &c.

At length on the 2nd of January, after a fortnight's delay, the delegates were introduced at St. James's by Mr. Dundas. They delivered the petition to his Majesty, who received them very graciously, and was extremely polite on the occasion.

The delegates had an interview subsequently with the British Minister, who, according to their account,* seemed convinced of the necessity of emancipating, as it was termed, or satisfying the Catholics, and who desired them to judge of the British Ministry by the conduct of their friends in Ireland. The impression on the minds of the delegates was that Mr. Dundas would not have any objection to a full bill of relief, though they found it difficult to bring him to any thing specific, on account, as he said, of the independence of the Irish Parliament and Government. Lord Abercorn and Sir Evan Nepean were present at the interview. Sir Evan's opinion was decidedly in favour of the Catholics, and of their asserting in strong language their claims for relief.

Of the persons who composed the delegation,

* Private report to the Convention.

the first in point of talent was Mr. Keogh. He was the ablest man of the Catholic body; he had a powerful understanding, and few men of that class were superior in intellect, or even equal to him. His mind was strong and his head was clear; he possessed judgment and discretion, and had the art to unite and bring men forward on a hazardous enterprize, and at a critical moment. He did more for the Roman Catholics than any other individual of that body. To his exertions the meeting of the Convention was principally owing, and their success in procuring the elective franchise. He had the merit of raising a party, and bringing out the Catholic people. Before his time they were nothing; their Bishops were servile, and Doctor Troy, Archbishop of Dublin, though an excellent man, was under the influence of the Castle.

The Catholic clergy possessed at that time great weight, and could easily get up addresses among the people; and it is very probable that even then the Government interfered in the appointment of their bishops. Keogh had the merit of breaking down that system, as subsequent events have proved; for since that time the people have gone along with their clergy, so far as interests agree, but they do not follow them if they differ. Keogh prevented the junction of the Catholic prelates with the upper orders, who to a certain extent (as in the Kenmare address, and that of the Sixty-eight) had seceded from the people. He was the first of the Catholics who formed the plan of an *extended* committee (for committees had existed among the Catholics of Ireland for upwards of eighty years.) At the outset of life he had been in business, and began as a humble tradesman. He continued to get into the Catholic committee, and

instantly formed a plan to destroy the aristocratic part, and introduce the democratic. He wrote, he published, he harangued, and strove to kindle some spirit among the people. In 1792 he came to Mr. Peter Burrowes, who was always a friend to the Catholics, and told him that he had failed, — that the people would not stir,—that there would be no public meetings,—that he began to despair ; and that he could not excite them.

At length his efforts were crowned with success, and that by the very party who were his bitterest foes—Mr. Beresford and Lord Clare. Lord Clare (as already stated) had procured very violent resolutions in the county of Limerick ; stating what Protestant Ascendancy meant,—namely, that it was the monopoly of all the places,—and all the establishments, to the total exclusion of all the Roman Catholics. Mr. Foster got up another set of resolutions from the county of Louth, and Mr. Beresford another from the counties of Dublin and Londonderry : with these documents Keogh came to Mr. Grattan, and exclaimed with great delight, " By G—! Lord Clare has done what I so long attempted and attempted in vain—he has roused the Catholics."

In fact these resolutions brought them forward, rendered them active, and in the end successful. It is worthy of remark that Tone, who succeeded Richard Burke as secretary to the Catholics, was thoroughly adverse to Keogh,—neither liked the other. Keogh distrusted Tone, and had refused to become an united Irishman.* He wished to

* An anecdote related to be by an intimate friend of Mr. Keogh, and of which I have no doubt, is here worth mentioning. It will shew how easy it would have been for Government, even at the latest period, to have retained the affections of the people. It happened that in the year 1797 a foreigner got introduced to Mr. Keogh. In the course of their acquaintance they often talked politics, as Mr. Keogh belonged to the liberal party. This individual was highly pleased ; he expatiated on the grievances of the country, he remarked how oppressed the Irish were,

steer the Catholics clear of that rock; and hence Tone never forgave him.

Keogh possessed two qualities that must always get a man forward,—flattery and satire. He used to dine with the members of the opposition at the Duke of Leinster's, where he met Lord Moira (then Rawdon), Mr. Conolly, Mr. Ponsonby, and others of their party. He flattered them, which none disliked; and occasionally he came out with some very severe satire, and attacked their conduct with some talent, and without any mercy.

When Keogh went to London, he was introduced to Mr. Burke, who liked him, and said that he possessed arts that were certain to raise him in the world. The account of that mission afforded Mr. Burke and Mr. Grattan much amusement—seeing Keogh and the other delegates on their journey to London,—admitted to the first court in Europe,—going in great state, and making a splendid appearance. Keogh in particular was prodigiously fine; he wore silk stockings, and a round, sharp-buckled tie-wig, with two rows of hard curls, that were extremely well powdered. He was highly delighted with his position—looked very grand and very vain;—he seemed to soar above all those he had left in Ireland. But when he returned home he had too much good sense to preserve his grandeur; he laid aside his court wig, and his court manner, and only retained his Irish feelings.

and the Catholics in particular—that there were great means of resistance, and that he could assist and would advise Keogh to take part in resistance to oppression. Keogh told him he was quite wrong; that his plan was most absurd, and that nothing could be worse or more dangerous. The man becoming troublesome, Keogh grew apprehensive that he would do mischief, and at last told him he would complain to Government; and the individual still persisting, a complaint was accordingly made to the proper authorities, and he was obliged to quit the kingdom.

CHAPTER IV.

The Irish Parliament meets, Jan. 1793—Speech from the throne in favour of the Roman Catholics—Lord Clare's opposition and speech—Injurious effects on the minds of the Catholics—Mr. Grattan's amendment to the address—Opposes French doctrines—Mr. Hobart (secretary) brings in the bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics—Seconded by Sir Hercules Langrishe—Mr. Grattan's speech—Lord Clare's reply to the Bishop of Killala—*Expresses his dread of a Union*—Abuse of the people—Doctor Duigenan, his character—Singular duel—Loyalty of the Catholics—Their treatment—Lord Thurlow—Conduct of Mr. Pitt—Letter of the King—Lord Thurlow's remarks on it—Lord Loughborough, Chancellor of England—His character and conduct—Anecdote—His letters to Mr. Grattan—Richard Burke's letter, and Edmund Burke's remarkable letter to Mr. Grattan on Irish affairs.

On the 10th January, 1793, Parliament assembled, when suddenly a new and singular phenomenon in Irish politics presented itself, to the surprise of some, the joy of many, and the mortification of others. For the first time, the situation of the Roman Catholics was introduced in a speech from the throne, in liberal and conciliatory language, and with a view to their substantial relief.

The Lord-lieutenant stated to both Houses that he had it in particular command from His Majesty to recommend them to apply themselves to the consideration of such measures as might be most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of His Majesty's subjects in support of the established constitution. With this view, His Majesty trusted that the situation of His Catholic subjects would engage their serious attention, and in the consideration of this he relied on the wis-

dom and liberality of His Parliament. The Speech also stated that he had directed an increase of military force, as views of conquest and dominion had incited France to interfere with the affairs of other countries.

The address was seconded by Mr. Wesley, (Duke of Wellington,) who expressed himself friendly to the claims of the Roman Catholics. This recommendation greatly astonished the high church party, who had been so very active against the Catholics the year before, and with the sanction of this very Government. The Chancellor, the Archbishop of Cashel (Agar), Lord Farnham, and Doctor Duigenan, the country gentlemen, and the grand jurors in particular, who had been formerly instigated to oppose the Catholics, now found themselves abandoned; and the very reverse of the principles in which they were foolishly tutored was now recommended from the highest authority in the State.

Lord Clare was offended, as well as disconcerted. He had not been in the confidence of the British minister, as will appear from the letter of Lord Loughborough to Mr. Grattan which mentions that the wishes of the British Chancellor and Cabinet should only be disclosed to the two secretaries; and from what has been already stated, it is clear that the proceedings in regard to the Catholics were carried on without his knowledge or approbation. In the debate on the address, he did every thing but condemn the speech of his Royal master, and he took that opportunity of inveighing against the Catholics and their petition to the King, which he termed "a gross and malignant deception, with which he did not suppose that any set of men would dare to approach the throne." He entered into a long history of the penal laws, and declared *that the Catholic grievances should be finally*

settled this session, and that if any man looked to the total repeal of the Popery laws, it was an absurd and a wicked speculation;—that *it was impossible a zealous Catholic could support either a Protestant Establishment, or the connexion with Great Britain;*—that if Ireland made the experiment, the Establishment and the connexion would be put to the issue of the sword. He trusted that no degree of lenity, rashness, or timidity, would induce the Parliament of Ireland to yield her best security.

These ill-timed, illiberal, and injudicious sentiments, were most injurious to the Government and to the country, particularly when coming from so high an authority as that of the Chancellor, and contrasted with the benevolent disposition just displayed by the Crown; they were, in fact, suggestions to the King to hate his Irish subjects, and must naturally have disinclined those subjects, however loyal and affectionate before; for it is probable that if a man declares another to be his enemy, he will make him so; or if a man say to two others, "You must to all eternity be enemies," they will either avoid him, or avoid one another, or hate one another; so that, afterwards, when the King continued in his services the individual who declared that no Catholic could support a Protestant establishment or British connexion, the people were led to suppose that the King credited the defamation, and they naturally reciprocated the sentiment of hostility, and thus the Irish Catholics were taught by the Irish Chancellor to hate, because they supposed themselves hated. This speech was a wicked attempt to alienate the King from his people by pronouncing the people alienated from the King; it raised suspicion and jealousy on one side, by the assurance of detestation on the other, and laid a

train of discord between religion and religion, nation and nation, King and subject; and unfortunately this false witness against the Catholic became afterwards a true prophet, and at a later period the coronation oath was successfully set up by George III. as a final barrier to their emancipation, and it delayed the measure for upwards of thirty years.

In the House of Commons Mr. Grattan proposed an amendment to the address :—

"That we admire the wisdom which at so critical a season has prompted your Majesty to come forward and take a leading part in healing the political dissensions of your people on account of religion. We shall take into our immediate consideration the subject graciously recommended from the throne; and at a time when doctrines pernicious to freedom and dangerous to monarchical government are propagated in foreign countries; we shall not fail to impress your Majesty's Catholic subjects with a sense of the singular and eternal obligation they owe to the throne and to your Majesty's Royal person and family."

These sentiments were wise and judicious, both in reference to the claims of the Catholics, and the doctrines in France. Mr. Grattan was always as adverse to the one, as he was friendly to the other; and the line which he now took, as well as that in the subsequent year, facilitated the admission of Lord Fitzwilliam and his party to power, and for a moment opened to Ireland a new and more pleasing prospect. The amendment was agreed to without a division.

As the Catholic Bill was the leading measure of this year (1793), it may be followed at once throughout its several stages.

On the 4th of February, Mr. Hobart presented a petition from certain Roman Catholic bishops and others, complaining of the penal laws, and praying to be restored to the rights and privileges

of the constitution. Some objections were made by Sir Henry Cavendish, on account of the omission of the word "titular" to the signatures of the bishops; but the objections were not supported, and the petition was received. Mr. Hobart, after panegyrizing the conduct of the Catholics, stated the outline of his measure;—first, to give them the right of voting at elections;—secondly, to enable them to vote for magistrates in cities and corporate towns—to enable them to sit as grand jurors—to disallow challenges against Catholics on petty juries—to authorize His Majesty to enable Catholics to endow a college and school—to allow them to carry arms when possessed of certain property—to empower them to be magistrates, and to hold civil offices under certain limitations. He said that it was in contemplation to admit them to hold commissions in the army and navy, after a communication had been made upon the subject to the English Government. He then got leave to bring in the bill, and was seconded by Sir Hercules Langrishe in a very able and judicious speech.

The bill was opposed by Dr. Duigenan, in a speech remarkable for length, its violence, and its hostility to the Catholics; comprising a history as well as a libel upon Ireland. His principle was this: "A Protestant King, a Protestant Parliament, a Protestant Hierarchy, Protestant electors and Government, the bench of justice, the army and the revenue, through all their branches and detail, Protestants." Such was the doctrine which the high church party in Ireland then strove to uphold, and this in a kingdom where the Catholics amounted to 3,000,000, and the Protestants to 500,000, many of whom were friendly to the Catholics, and a convention of whom in the province of Ulster, had, a few days previous (15th of

February), met at Dungannon, and after debating for two days, had decided in favour of the immediate and unqualified admission of their Roman Catholic brethren, as well as in favour of a radical reform in the representation of the people.

On the 18th, Mr. Hobart proposed his Bill. After some debating, and a suggestion from Sir Lawrence Parsons, that the elective franchise should only be extended to Catholics who had 20*l.* a-year freehold property, it was agreed that the Bill should be read a second time on the 22d of February: on this occasion the old opponents of the Catholics, indignant at the treatment they received, and at the inconsistency of Government, who had made them the dupe of their artifice or incapacity, now appeared in the arena with renewed determination, and loudly protested against the proceedings adopted by the Minister. On the other hand, the friends of the people particularly exerted themselves, especially the Provost (Hutchinson), Messrs. Ponsonby, Curran, Forbes, Day, and Duquery. They contended that the Bill should have conceded more, and at once have gone the whole length, and given seats in Parliament; that it was not natural or possible that the Catholics could remain quiet or content with half power or half privileges. Mr. Grattan expressed the same opinion in a speech distinguished for its fire and spirit, which the publications of the day called "so divine an enthusiasm, that if ever a heavenly impulse animated a human breast, it was visible on this occasion." The concluding part is here inserted :—

"I understand the policy of Rome and of Sparta: their slaves could have no landed nor commercial property; but yours may, and may add to physical superiority of numbers the political influence of riches; and a vast landed property—they may become a great power in the nation, and

no part of the state. Who will answer for the satisfaction of those proprietors? It is not life, but the condition of living; the slave is not so likely to complain of the want of property, as the proprietor of the want of privilege. The human mind is progressive:—the child does not look back to the parent that gave him being, nor the people to the legislator that gave them the power of acquisition; but both look forward; the one to provide for the comforts of life, and the other to obtain all the privileges of property.

"Your imperfect grants and comprehensive theories have given those aspiring thoughts, and let in that train of ideas which may hereafter greatly serve, or marvellously distract your country; you have already given to their mind the first principles of motion, and the laws of motion (and not yours) must direct the machine.

"The germ on the soul, like the child in the womb, or the seed in the earth, swell in their stated time to their destined proportions, by virtue of their laws, which we neither make nor controul. Talk not in such cases of gratitude; rely on that gratitude which is founded on interest,—such gratitude as governed yourselves from 1691, when you secured your property, to 1779, when you demanded your trade; and in 1782, when you demanded your liberty, from a colony looking only to property, to a people looking to a free form of government,—from planters joining with the mother country against the Catholics, to a nation joining with the Catholics to exact of the mother country trade and freedom. Do I condemn you? Such is the progress of nations, such the nature of man, and such his gratitude! * * * *

"I have read of a republic, where the whole business of life was neglected, to give place to mathematical investigation. I can suppose a more extraordinary state, where the law excluded from serving the public, three-fourths of the people, unless they would give a theological opinion, touching an abstract point of divinity, and verify that opinion on oath. I have heard of Athens—that cruel republic—excluding so many of her own children from the rights of citizenship; but she only had the wisdom of Socrates, the light of Plato;—she had not, like you, the revelations to instruct her; besides, she had not the press—she had not the benefits of your lesson. What lesson?—that to a people it was not life, but the condition of living; and to be bound without your own consent, was to be a slave;—

and therefore you were not satisfied in 1782 with the free exercise of your religion, but demanded —— however, I do not rely on your private productions. What are your public tracts, your repeated addresses to the King, the Speaker's annual speech to the throne,—what are they, while the penal code remains, but so many dangerous and inflammatory publications, felicitating the Protestants on the blessings of that constitution from whence three-fourths are excluded,—but above all, that instrument, infinitely more incendiary than all Mr. Paine has written,—that instrument which you annually vote,—what is it now? A challenge to discontent,—that money bill, I mean, wherein you dispose of the money of 3,000,000 of the people without their consent. You do not stir, nor vote, nor speak, without suggesting to the Catholics some motive either in provocation of your blessing, or the poison of your free principles;—some motive, I say, which is fatal to that state of quietism, wherein, during this age of discussion, you must enlap your people in order to give your government the chance of repose. You are struggling with difficulties, you imagine; you are mistaken; you are struggling with impossibilities. To enchain the mind—to case in the volatile essential soul —nor power, nor dungeon, much less Parliament, can be retentive of those fires kindled by yourselves in the breast of your fellow-subjects, living on the confines and the carousals of your freedom. Distrust that religious vanity which tells you that these men are not fit for freedom; they have answered that vanity in a strain of oratory peculiar to the oppressed. It is the error of sects to value themselves more upon their differences, than their religion; and in these differences, in which they forget the principles of their religions they imagine they have discovered the mystery of their salvation, and to this suppressed discovery they have offered human sacrifices. What human sacrifices have we offered?—the dearest—the liberties of our fellow subjects. Distrust again that fallacious policy which tells you that your power is advanced by their bondage; it is not your power, but your punishment; it is liberty withot energy; you know it: it presents you with a monopoly, and the monopoly of others, not your own;—it presents you with the image of a monster in a state when the heart gives no circulation, and the limbs receive no life; —a nominal representative, and a nominal people. Call not this your misfortune: it is your sentence; it is your

execution. Never could the law of nature suffer one set of men to take away the liberty of another, and that a numerous part of their own people, without feeling some diminution of their own strength and freedom. But, in making laws on the subject of religion, legislators forget mankind, until their own distraction admonishes them of two truths,—the one, that there is a God,—the other, that there is a people. Never was it permitted to any nation,—they may perplex their understanding with various apologies,—but never long was it permitted to exclude from essential,—from what they themselves have pronounced essential blessings, a great portion of themselves, for periods of time, and for no reason, or what is worse, for such reason as you have advanced.

"Conquerors, or tyrants proceeding from conquerors, have scarcely ever, for any length of time, governed by these partial disabilities; but a people so to govern itself, or rather, under the name of government, so to exclude one another,—the industrious, the opulent, the useful,—that part that feeds you with its industry, and supplies you with its taxes, weaves that you may wear, and ploughs that you may eat,—to exclude a body so useful, so numerous, and that for ever, and in the mean time to tax them *ad libitum*, and occasionally to pledge their lives and fortunes!—for what?—for their disfranchisement. It cannot be done: continue it, and you expect from your laws what it were blasphemy to ask of your Maker. Such a policy always turns on the inventor, and bruises him under the stroke of the sceptre, or the sword, or sinks him under the accumulation of debt and loss of dominion. Need I go to instances? What was the case of Ireland, enslaved for a century, and withered and blasted with her Protestant ascendancy, like a shattered oak, seethed on its hill by the fires of its own intolerance? What lost England America, but such a policy?—an attempt to bind men by a Parliament wherein they are not represented,—such an attempt as some would now continue to practise on the Catholics, and to involve England. What was it saved England to Ireland, but the contrary policy? I have seen these principles of liberty verified by yourselves,—I have heard addresses, from counties and cities here, on the subject of the slave-trade, to Mr. Wilberforce, thanking him for his efforts to set free a distressed people. Has your pity traversed leagues of sea to sit down by the black boy on the Coast of Guinea, and

have you forgot the man at home by your side, your brother? Come, then, and by one great act cancel this code, and prepare your mind for that bright order of time which now seems to touch your condition!"

On the 25th, Mr. George Knox proposed the admission of Roman Catholics to sit in Parliament, in which he was seconded by Major, afterwards Sir John Doyle, and opposed by Mr. Wesley, and the motion was rejected by 136 to 69.

On the 27th, the Bill went into committee. It was opposed by the Speaker, Mr. Foster, and Mr. Ogle. Doctor Duigenan proposed to limit the elective franchise to 20*l.* freehold property. Mr. Vandeleur proposed as an amendment, that it should be limited to 10*l.* This was rejected by 144 to 72. An amendment, by Mr. Warburton, to limit the franchise to 5*l.* was likewise negatived.

On the 2nd of March, Mr. Hobart presented a sketch of the oath to be taken by the Catholics. It consisted of the whole of the oath of the 13th and 14th of the King; and embraced also many of the leading points contained in the late Catholic declaration. Doctor Duigenan proposed a much longer one, but this was objected to, and at length, out of both, one was composed, which was upwards of a page in length, and a very offensive composition. The bill thus altered—*not amended*,—passed on the 7th of March, and on the 15th was sent to the Lords, where it met with considerable opposition from the Chancellor and the Archbishop of Cashel. It was, however, warmly supported by the Bishop of Killala (Law); in reply to whom Lord Clare expressed himself in the following singular terms, and gave his opinion on the Union which is certainly very remarkable:

"When principles of anarchy, the rage of innovation,

and the epidemical frenzy seem to have reached this House,—when inflammatory declamation, and ill-advised mis-statements come from the reverend Bench, and attacks upon the existing Government, I feel it necessary to rise in defence of the Constitution. Before I allude more particularly to the right reverend Prelate,* I must assume the office of his apologist; and the apologies I shall make for him will be, an utter and radical ignorance of the laws and constitution of the country from whence he came, and the laws and constitution of the country in which he lives."

He wished "to resist further innovation, and foresaw, in granting more than the present bill gave, *a total separation from England, or a union with her*—EACH TO BE EQUALLY DREADED." These latter expressions will strike every reader acquainted with the history of these times, and with Lord Clare's subsequent conduct on the Union, as very surprising. The report of the speech is accurate; but it must be observed, that at this period Lord Clare was dissatisfied with the British minister. He had not been consulted by him, and, ambitious of power, and seeking to monopolize all government, he expressed himself against a Union, perhaps because he supposed the British minister was for it.

The bill passed both Houses, and on the 9th of April received the Royal assent, and so far raised the Catholic, in point of law, to a level with his Protestant fellow-countryman; but, in point of fact, as far as regarded promotion at the bar, or the enjoyment of civil and corporate rights, Roman Catholics remained excluded in many cases just as much as if the law had not passed. It was not till 1822 (Lord Wellesley's administration) that they were promoted in the legal profession, under the provisions of this bill; nor was it until

* Brother to Lord Ellenborough, who was afterwards Chief Justice of England, and who was perhaps as capable of instructing his brother in the laws and constitution of his country, as Lord Fitzgibbon was.

the passing of the Corporation Bill in 1840 that they actually enjoyed those privileges which had been granted to them so far back as 1793, the corporations constantly excluding them.* So necessary it is for the people to have in power men friendly to their liberties; and so unfit are those men to carry into effect liberal laws which they have so long opposed, and have at length adopted, not from choice, but necessity.

During the passing of this bill, the Catholic Convention, acting by their sub-committee, had deputed three of their body to wait upon the Secretary, and inform him, that in their opinion nothing less than an unlimited emancipation would satisfy the Catholics. Mr. Hobart, having got leave from the House to bring in his measure, sent for the deputation, and declared to them his opinion:—

"That nothing could be done in the business whatever, unless he should be enabled to say that they would be satisfied with the measures at present intended; that by being satisfied, he meant that the public mind should not be irritated in the manner it had been for some time back; that it was not meant to say that future applications might not be made, but that, if the Catholics would not for the present be satisfied, it was better to make a stand here than to concede, and thereby to give them strength by which they might be able farther to embarrass the administration next session."

This declaration, which was not very statesmanlike, but which he found it his duty to make, excited some dissatisfaction among the Catholic body. However, the ablest men of their Conven-

* In April 1794, Mr. Weldon, a Roman Catholic, presented a petition to the Guild of Merchants, praying his admission into the Corporation. He was objected to upon principle, and was rejected by 83 to 56, and no Catholics were ever admitted. Another attempt was made in 1822, but failed, though supported by the Latouche and Hutchinson families. Lord Wellesley was Lord-lieutenant; but as a *counterpoise*, Mr. Goulburn was secretary. Such was the policy of those days.

tion were of opinion, that they should take what they could get, and accordingly it seemed better, on the whole, not to adopt any proceeding in consequence of Mr. Hobart's communication, but let matters quietly proceed.

The result of this policy, and of the proceedings on the part of the Government, was just what might have been expected. There was not perfect satisfaction throughout the country, still less was there national content. There was sulky complaining and unaccommodating loyalty. A friendly Government, and a mild manner in dealing with the people, who must, on the whole, have rejoiced at what was obtained, though it was not all they wished, would have reconciled all minor differences, and united all classes of people. But it happened, unfortunately for the restoration of peace and good will, that the debates on the Catholic question were made the vehicle of a new style of discussion in both Houses of Parliament, — unmeasured calumny and abuse, charges of disaffection and hostility pronounced eternal. Doctor Duigenan had the chief, though not the exclusive, merit of introducing the practice. He indulged in the most violent invectives against the religion of the people, just as Lord Clare did against their civil liberties; and it may be said that these two individuals commenced, in words, as well as in deeds, *the war of religion*.

Doctor Duigenan was descended from a country peasant of the name of O'Dewegenan. He was educated for the Roman Catholic priesthood, but being assisted by a Protestant clergyman, who kept a boarding-school, and who found in young O'Dewegenan an aptitude for learning, which he had contracted at the hedge-schools,

where he had been first instructed, he was advanced to the office of tutor in his establishment. Upon this, O'Dewegenan changed his name and his religion. He entered Dublin College, obtained a scholarship, and then a law fellowship. His propensities here discovered themselves, and he began very early the practice of abuse. He assailed Provost Hutchinson and all his family, male and female, and wrote against them the essay entitled, *Lachrymæ Academicæ*. He then attacked Doctor O'Leary, and published several letters under a fictitious signature, full of hostility to his former creed, as is generally the case with men who desert their religion. He did not, however, confine his enmity to words, but personally assailed the Provost. He had attached himself to Mr. Tisdall, the Attorney-General; for he clung to power, and was fond of protection. Aware that the Provost and Tisdall were political opponents, he addressed the former one day as he was coming out of the Court of King's Bench, and in a phrase more peculiar to the wilds of America than to the hall of justice, concluded his attack by telling him, "*he would bulge his eye.*" The Provost disdained to wreak his revenge upon so low a retainer of Government, and determined to make Tisdall answerable. Accordingly, he applied immediately to him. Mr. Grattan (for this occurred when he was at the bar) happened to be in court at the time, and saw a rush of the silk gowns around the party, as they retired to a private chamber. How this terminated, has been already stated in a preceding volume. Death, that saved the two parties, one from prosecution, and the other probably from conviction, did not rescue Duigenan from general condemnation. This individual, in looks, manner, phrase, and gesture, was more than plebeian;—hard in feature, and

forbidding in appearance, his intellect was strong, but rude in the extreme,—his zeal and his anger were vehement and uncontrolled,—his mind was narrow, coarse, and illiberal;—no ray of genius, generosity, or talent was there discernible; and though he talked much of religion, he appeared little affected by its precepts, and still less influenced by its charity. He seemed never to think of his God but as a scourge to his fellow-creatures. He was an arbitrary lawyer, and a prompt instrument of power;—always ready to take up her side against liberty. The nation to whom he owed his birth, he slandered,—the common people, from whom he sprung, he vituperated;—and the religion of his wife he persecuted. He abused the people; he abused the Catholics; he abused his country. He sought to recommend himself to Mr. Pitt, by abusing Mr. Fox; and to Lord Clare, by abusing Mr. Grattan; and to the sister country, by calumniating his own. Yet in private life he was not a bad man;—he was a kind and indulgent master, and a good husband, even to a Catholic wife. His hostility to the *Papists*, as he always called them, was whimsically exemplified; for though his own name was not easily pronounced, yet he affected a difficulty in pronouncing that of *Keogh*, which drew from Curran the remark, "that he shewed his enmity by actually *gnawing* the petitioners' names." His manner of speaking resembled that of a mob-man in the last stage of agony, and it might be supposed that he had by accident burst his way into the House of Commons, and not have known in what assembly he was placed. On the Catholic question in 1805, he came in with a library, and overwhelmed the assembly with its contents,—tedious and extravagant quotations. The Council of Lateran was his fort,

and furnished him with ample munition of war either for attack or for defence—for illogical reasoning or unfounded representations. He delighted in raking up old councils and Papal bulls that had lain buried for ages, and he detailed them with a dull and a drowsy minuteness. If he showed any learning, it was of this kind, and had lain on the shelf for ages, so covered with dust, that the ears and eyes of the auditors were enveloped in the cloud that he raised when he touched these ancient and decayed relics. Curran used to say, it was "*like the unrolling of a mummy,—nothing but old bones and rotten rags.*" His speeches were pamphlets; his pamphlets were libels. It was singular that any society of men could have listened to him, though even Ireland was the subject of his calumny; and it may be truly said that the greatest censure of Mr. Pitt's government was *to support or to be supported* by such a character. He did not, however, undergo these labours for nothing, or wade through the mire of political controversy and national vituperation without fee or reward. All his imperfections were, in the eyes of the British minister, considered as qualifications for office and honour. The more he calumniated his country, the more he raised himself. He was espoused by the minister in England, as well as by the minister in Ireland, and by the church in both countries. He was considered the champion of the established religion, and the defender of the true faith. He was appointed Surrogate to the High Court of Admiralty, and Advocate-General to the King,—Vicar-general of the Metropolitan Court of Armagh,—Judge of the Prerogative Court of Ireland,—Vicar-general of the Consistorial Court. He was named one of the commissioners for distributing compensation at the period of the Union;—he was then elected

a member of the Imperial Parliament for the borough belonging to the Archbishop of Armagh; and as a climax of his rewards, he was appointed member of the Privy Council of Ireland, and there his name will ever remain on record, to shew posterity how easy it was for a minister to injure and insult a nation, without dread of censure, feelings of remorse, or fear of punishment.*

It is worth examining whether the Catholics merited the treatment and abuse which they had so long received. And let it be first observed, that in all public questions, although the Catholics accompanied their measures with some violence and some imprudence, yet they spoke like men belonging to a nation.

In the year 1715, after the penal code was riveted upon them without hope of end,—when the cause of the House of Stuart was alive, and the Hanoverian succession recent, and rebellion broke out in Scotland, the Irish Catholics did not take up arms. In 1746, a rebellion broke out in the same place. The son of their late prince was in

* A ludicrous anecdote is related of this individual,—a proof rather of insanity than of courage. He had grossly insulted Sir Richard Borough in the law courts. A message was in consequence sent to him, and he drove to the ground in his carriage, leaving his coachman on the box while he took his position opposite Sir Richard. The pistols were loaded and laid at his feet, and the ground measured; but Duigenan declined to take them up. Mr. Fleming, who was second to Sir Richard, called on him to do so: he refused, and being again called on, he again refused, and called out to Sir Richard, "*Fire away, you rascal!*" This Sir Richard would not do, and he was withdrawn from the ground. Mr. Fleming then told Duigenan that if he considered Sir Richard as not entitled to satisfaction, he was ready to take his place. On which Duigenan, taking him by the hand, said, "*Oh, my dear friend, the farthest thing from my mind would be to fire at you.*" Duigenan being afterwards asked what he meant by such strange conduct, and why he declined to fire, replied, "If the fellow had missed the first shot and the second shot, I would have taken my pistol and walked up to him; and if he had not begged his life, I would have blown out his brains; and if he begged to live, I would have taken my penknife and cut off his ear!"

the field, with all the recommendation of youth, all the appearance of romantic enterprise, and some likelihood of success: the Irish Catholics did not rebel. In 1759 a descent was made upon Ireland by the subjects of a Catholic monarch: they did not rise in arms. In 1779 a descent was apprehended from the same quarter: Ireland had no army, no Volunteers; and England—the glory and strength of England was gone, and she was unequal to her enemies by sea and land: the Catholics did not rise. In 1781, another descent was apprehended: the Catholics did not rise. Thus they beheld the empire in its zenith and its decline, without prosperity or insurrection.

At the period when the armed associations sprang up, the Catholics in the southern parts of Ireland fell into the constitutional file, and when the Volunteers expressed their sentiments, and signed the declaration of rights as an article of union and association, the Catholics did not decline; and a body of them joined one of the corps to which Mr. Grattan belonged, and subscribed the declaration to maintain the independency of the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. The county of Galway, that was full of Catholics, displayed at the outset a public fire and constitutional ardour, that reflected upon them the highest honour. That high-minded people took the lead in the non-importation agreement; they took the lead in the six months' money bill; they expressed themselves most decidedly on the subject of the Irish constitution; and most unequivocally reprobated the Perpetual Mutiny Bill, and on that subject this county produced a famous publication, written with the pen of classic taste, the fire of a freeman, and the depth of a politician.* Thus had

* Denis Daly most likely assisted in it.

the Catholics acted; but the British Minister and the Parliament always trifled with the passions of Ireland. Friendly at one moment, faithless at another, they were, in 1792, the very reverse of what they were in 1793. They granted timidly; they granted unsteadily. They first fired the appetite, and then wanted discretion and boldness to allay it, by granting liberally. They acted towards the Catholics in a political way, as they before had acted towards the Protestants in a commercial one:—instead of repealing at once the restrictive laws on trade, they only granted, in 1775, a power to export cloth to the Irish troops in America, and a power of *fishing for whales in Newfoundland!* They then granted, in 1778, a power to export all Irish manufactures except cotton and woollen! and to import all the growth of the plantations except their principal produce; and in 1779 they granted a power of growing tobacco, which afterwards was repealed. They now proceeded with respect to the Catholics, to adopt a policy equally barren and equally foolish. They hoped to continue that body from year to year in a continual state of good behaviour, feeding them, as mendicants, on their bounty; and instead of gratified and heartened subjects, to retain them the humble candidates for the spare and measured charity of a cunning Parliament. Nothing could be more contemptible or silly than this policy. Like a courtezan measuring out her favours, raising their passions, agitating and wearing out their heart by endless coquetry and dalliance, they forgot that, wedded to this body as fellow-subjects, they should not practise on their feelings, nor cheat their affections.

By this irritating bounty, and by this policy, which discovered a wish to mollify, not to serve, the nation,—which disclosed a disposition (rather

an apprehension than a desire) to give,—by this timid yielding and provoking strain of equivocal concession, they inflamed the country; they fired the passions of the Irish, and taught them wishes and ambition, until at length their claim of right,* Protestant and Catholic, came thundering at the door of the Senate House, at the instance of a baffled and indignant nation, with which the British Minister was forced to comply, without thanks or limitation. Such was the system adopted towards Ireland.

At the outset of the proceedings, in 1793, a considerable difficulty threatened the Catholic question, and from a high quarter in England. But Mr. Grattan, who was concerned in the negotiation, very fortunately got over it, and thereby avoided much delay, and probably some disagreement in opinion and sentiment. Lord Loughborough at this period held the seals in England. He expected to obtain them at the period of the Regency; but as the current of politics seldom runs smooth, he was out-manœuvred by their possessor, Lord Thurlow, who seems on this occasion to have outwitted himself, as well as Lord Loughborough. Pending the negotiation, and to satisfy Lord Thurlow on the subject, Mr. Fox was induced to go to Lord Loughborough, who was sitting at the time in his court, and tell him he must give up all idea of the seals, as they were the only thing that could be given to satisfy Lord Thurlow. Thus both parties were destined to be punished—Lord Loughborough for the imprudent advice he gave Mr. Fox, and Lord Thurlow for the insincere support he gave Mr. Pitt. This conduct of Lord Thurlow, and the private interviews he had held with the Prince, awakened the suspicions and dislike of Mr. Pitt, and the parties

* 1779, 1782, 1792, 1793, 1829.

did not long remain together on friendly terms. Coldness and reserve so marked the conduct of the Chancellor, that at length the Minister stated to the King that they could not continue in office together, and that he would not form part of the administration if Lord Thurlow remained. On this occasion Mr. Pitt showed great ingratitude; for he was much indebted to Lord Thurlow, who, after Mr. Fox's India Bill, had advised the King to make Mr. Pitt First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The King asked if he was not too young. Lord Thurlow replied that he was a man of talent, and would well unite the two offices. But now, at the instance of Mr. Pitt, he was dismissed. Accordingly the King wrote to say, "how painful it was to be forced to part with so faithful a servant (he was Chancellor for 13 years); that it was a great sacrifice, but he was obliged to do it, as Mr. Pitt would not remain in office along with him." He desired him to choose his time for giving up the seals, to finish the business of his court, and to dispose of the small places in his gift among his friends. Lord Thurlow,* however, did not think this letter sincere; and his executor, who found it among his papers, and who gave this account of it, found also Lord Thurlow's remarks upon the King, in which he stated "that the King had deceived all his Ministers, and was most civil and courteous to the person whom at that very moment he was going to turn out:—*he loves to make a bishop, and his object, throughout his reign, has been to beat down*

* A passage in Milton was said to apply very justly to Lord Thurlow:—

* * "Deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care."

Some one having observed, in Mr. Fox's company, that Lord Thurlow was an *impostor*,—"Yes," said Fox, "there never was a man half so wise as Lord Thurlow looks."

the aristocracy of England." The individual who succeeded Lord Thurlow as Chancellor, had performed various parts in politics. He had been counsel in 1774 against Dr. Franklin, who had been summoned before the Privy Council as agent to the Province of Massachusetts, from whence a petition had been forwarded for the removal of the Governor and Lieut.-Governor, in consequence of their letters advising that the liberties of the Americans should be restrained, that penalties should be imposed on them, and that their charters should be altered. Doctor Franklin having procured these letters, gave them to be published, and hence arose great indignation at the disclosure, and at the mode by which they were said to have been obtained. On this, Lord Loughborough (then Mr. Wedderburne) inveighed against Franklin in the most violent and unmeasured terms, accusing him of robbery and forgery, and applying to him these words,—"I forged the letter —I hated—I despised—and I destroy. But what poetic fiction only had penned for the breast of a cruel African, Doctor Franklin has realized and transcribed from his own." Altogether it was said to have been one of the most singular speeches ever delivered in any court of justice. His feelings with regard to Ireland were of a nature similar to those with regard to America; and it was singular that a man brought up under a free constitution, and enjoying its benefits, should have profited so little by its precepts, or prized so little its acquisition, as to have, *in toto*, opposed its extension to the people of Ireland. For, singular to say, he was the only man in the House of Lords who, in 1782, opposed the rights of Ireland *upon principle;* and when the Bill for the repeal of the 6th Geo. Ist was brought in, he stood up singly to oppose it, saying that it ought not to be a total

repeal, nor an unqualified repeal; that Poyning's law should still be kept in force; nor could he conceive that the Perpetual Mutiny Bill was a grievance of which the Irish should complain!!

It may be well supposed that such principles were not great recommendations in the mind of Mr. Grattan; but the latter knew his character, and that he could change his opinions as suited his purpose, and assume or lay them down, just as served his interest or his ambition. He was a very agreeable man, an excellent scholar, fond of literature and of polite society. In address he was affable, and in manner polished, and even elegant; but he was unsafe in council, rash in his advice, and versatile in his politics. He had a hot head, and would do mischief rather than do nothing; he seemed almost to be fond of it, and by his advice had brought Mr. Fox into a difficulty as to the Regency. He now proposed a plan as regarded the Catholics, somewhat similar to that which had been attempted in 1782—namely, *the delay of the question, and a cabinet negotiation;* the consequence of which would have been inextricable confusion. He accordingly wrote to Mr. Grattan, with whom he had a previous acquaintance,* suggesting an adjournment of the House,

* An anecdote regarding this individual, afforded much amusement to Mr. Grattan's friends, and among others, to the late Lord Holland (that excellent personage,—so noble so generous, so high minded, so universally respected and beloved.) Lord Loughborough prided himself on the correctness of his language and his polished style in speaking. It was said that he used to study, not only the arts of rhetoric, but the attitudes likewise. On one occasion, being in company with Mr. Grattan, he was conversing about the Irish Parliament and the oratory of the Irish people. He alluded to Mr. Grattan's attack on Mr. Flood. "That figure of yours, Mr. Grattan, exceeded all license; 'hovering like an ill-omened bird of night;' the whole of that was very extraordinary, very severe indeed." The company were amused by the earnestness of Lord Loughborough's manner, as well as by the nature of his remark. He, however, persevered, "that was a very extraordinary sentence—very severe—very cutting!" Mr. Grattan looked surprised, and those present were puzzled to know how he

and obscurely intimating some project, which in fact was nothing but *an incipient union*. Mr. Grattan did not enter into these views; and though his letters to Lord Loughborough are not to be found, it is clear from his former, as well as his subsequent conduct, that such a proposition could meet with little encouragement from him. He was not induced to go to London on his suggestion, but thought it a wiser course to press the question forward as speedily as possible, and reconcile, as far as lay in his power, the various opposing and discordant parties in the state.

LORD LOUGHBOROUGH TO MR. GRATTAN.

30*th January*, 1793.

My Dear Sir,—I must borrow my Secretary's pen for a moment, though I am not sure it will be for the advantage of the request I have to state to you; but as I do not write only from myself, I have no right to delegate that trust which is committed to me, according to an old legal maxim.

Your presence here, at this most important crisis, is most anxiously wished by all those, who, I firmly believe, have nothing more at heart than the mutual prosperity, entire confidence, and perfect tranquillity of both our countries. No prejudice of any kind can exist which should obstruct such objects. Your opinions, I think, I partly know; your principles, I am sure I do; and both, I believe, have no other tendency than the public welfare. I can add, that I am persuaded the same ideas are entertained of them by those to whom (I hope on just grounds, and on full explanations) I have given my confidence.

If there could be *by adjournment, a cessation of active measures; if in that interval all irregular modes of discussion could be prevented or frustrated, and it should be employed in a fair and candid discussion of the several points which seem necessary to settle the situation of Ireland in a just conformity to that of England, and with a due share of the general fortune of the whole empire, prosperous or adverse, by*

would extricate himself; when, bowing very civilly to Lord Loughborough, he simply replied in his own words, "*Very cutting*, indeed, my lord." Lord Loughborough felt the allusion.

an adequate communication of interests, I am perfectly assured your satisfaction in such a result would be equal to mine; and I may, in confidence of your good opinion, venture to assert to you, that the hope of such a conclusion of the present untoward circumstances, was a chief inducement to me to engage in the arduous task I have undertaken.

I under-rate the importance of the object when I state it, as only regarding the two islands we belong to. The peace of mankind may finally depend upon it. I flatter myself, then, you will not resist my invitation; I make it as one who wishes to be ranked amongst your friends, for respect and esteem for your virtues. I should be warranted to state it to you, in a character that I have not long possessed, without the least dread of being disavowed; but I put in a higher claim to your confidence by writing to you, in the assurance of our respective intentions not being misunderstood by either; and, leaving it to your own judgment to take my communications either as merely private, or as in some degree appertaining to my public duty, as you think most expedient in respect to the measures you may be obliged to hold with others, my wish would be on my own account, that the knowledge might rest between ourselves and the two Secretaries,* to one of whom I beg particularly to express my best respects, and I leave the rest to the other to say, I am, with great regard, dear Sir, your most sincerely,

LOUGHBOROUGH.

LORD LOUGHBOROUGH TO MR. GRATTAN.

21*st February*, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,—I feel as I ought the confidence you repose in me, with respect to the difficulty that impedes your embracing the idea I had thrown out in my letter to you; and I shall, with equal frankness to yours, state to you the reasons which I think should remove them.

Permit me, in the first place, to observe to you, that what I proposed was not properly a *negotiation*, which I understand to be a business of reconciling opposite, or at least, separate views and interests. There are not, as I conceive, two parties on the important subject, which a free communication I believe would effectually clear up; sure I am there are no opposite interests to be reconciled. Whatever is the real interest of Ireland must be the in-

* Hobart and Hutchinson.

terest of Great Britain on a just and liberal scheme of policy. We have marked with attention, and without jealousy, the progress of your improvement; we must be weak and short-sighted, indeed, not to observe that the Administration must be adapted to the change of situation, and must be founded on the firm basis of public confidence and esteem; that to be respected, it must be responsible, and cannot subsist by favour and protection from any external support.

It has not appeared to me that any of the ideas which have gained the favour of respectable men in your country, are bad in their outline; but they will require great care, and much temper, in filling up that outline.

If the enemies of all the measures which must come into discussion, were to be the coadjutors of the conference upon them, I should expect little benefit from it, but on the supposition (of which I am firmly persuaded) that of those who may attend it, several have the fairest desire to listen to every proposition, and to weigh every argument impartially. I do not think that any inconvenience could result even from the greatest opposition of opinions; which, however, I do not think would be the case; for I believe the various opinions that have been held in Ireland are not in truth so remote from each other as they appear to be from some personal and private dispositions to differ, or, perhaps from the habit of differing.

As to the second part in your letter, I entirely agree with you that it is necessary all questions of such moment as now affect the public mind in Ireland, should receive a full discussion in Parliament; and it was by no means with a view to prevent that full discussion that I suggested the idea of a temporary cessation. My idea is plainly this; that at a convenient moment the usual business being advanced to a due point, an interval should take place by prorogation, for a very few weeks, under the idea of affording time to provide, and arrange the force you have very handsomely voted,* and that by a direct intercourse here, advantage should be taken of that interval to discuss fairly *a settlement of all questions, not for the moment only, but as far as our own views can reach, for the permanent connected establishment of Ireland, both internally, and relatively to England.* Circumstances of less general import, and yet of great weight in removing obstacles, may in the mean time take place, which would

* The militia were called out, and the regular army augmented.

possibly contribute much to the facility of execution, which is almost impossible during the agitation of debate. To this idea I foresee but one objection, which may spring from a doubt, whether a very unjust advantage might not be taken of such a delay, to put an abrupt period to the whole business for the present. In answer to that, I can only say, that such a measure would be so foolish, as well as so base, that I think I ask little when I claim your protection against that imputation, if it ever should be suggested. I have now submitted to you my ideas, without reserve, and after some discussion on the subject of your letter with others who have as much desire almost (for I will not say altogether, as my private reasons cannot be shared by them) to have a free conference with you.

I write by this post to Hutchinson, but more guardedly, and therefore I wish my *ire* to remain between ourselves, if you please: his presence here might be of service; yours, I am persuaded, would be of the greatest. Suspicious, I am sure, it could be to no one; you can only be responsible for your absence;* and although to be authorised by the people, is in itself impossible, I am confident they would ratify and applaud what had received your approbation, and merited your support. I am, my dear Sir, yours very sincerely,

LOUGHBOROUGH.

I leave my compliments to Mrs. Grattan by Lady L.

The letters of Mr. Burke and his son on the passing of the Catholic measure are deserving of notice. The remarks on Lord Clare's character and conduct confirm what has been already stated of that person. The sentiments of Mr. Burke will be found to apply to the present times and to the two parties in the state with as much force now as in the period when they were expressed. Little did Mr. Burke imagine that this religious contest would continue so long, and that what he wrote in 1793, would apply to the year 1841. So slow is the progress of the human mind, and the march of noble and generous sen-

* Mr. Grattan, did not, however, go over.

timents, and so difficult their victory over the passions and prejudices of mankind.

RICHARD BURKE TO MR. GRATTAN.

February 28th, 1793.

My dear Sir,—I am afraid I have much more reason than you have to apologize, for delaying to acknowledge the receipt of a letter. I might indeed plead business, if any thing that I can do, especially in such a time as this, can be entitled to so important an appellation; though, indeed, as Shakspeare says, "all men have business and desires, such as they are;" but the world is too much interested in every thing you do, not to allow you a plenary indulgence for any delays or omissions in the lesser offices of life. I do not therefore expect a punctual correspondence from you, though I shall always rejoice to be informed by your communications, and honoured with your commands. I believe I may safely say, *there never was a time in which your conduct was of more importance to the public, or in which you rendered it more effectual service, than by the line you took at the beginning of the sessions, and have since pursued.* It is indeed glorious for you to be what you are,—the only real prop and stay of Government in Ireland at this perilous moment; being situated as you are with regard to that Government, there is no man who can at all observe, that is not truly sensible of the magnanimity and wisdom of your conduct. If this was otherwise, I know you have that within which would set you above the unjust opinions of the world. That there should be some (whether it originates with your political opponents, I know not) to whom your recent merits are only an additional motive of calumny, you will not be surprised to hear. You may be assured that neither my father (who is infinitely flattered by the expression of your letter relative to him) nor myself omit any opportunity of doing justice to our own sentiments with regard to you; and I have the pleasure of knowing, that your services are known and properly felt by those who are most concerned by being most immediately responsible for the welfare of the empire.

I could certainly have wished that the Catholic Bill had gone farther. What is done, is not done in an ingenuous or a clever manner, but *with a grudging and suspicious hand, such as marks the authors of the measure.* Upon

the whole, however, I think it would be good policy in the Catholics to acquiesce, and even to testify satisfaction. It will be the best way to secure both the profitable enjoyment of the present concessions, and a speedy extension of them. On the other hand, if they continue discontented, it will seem mulish and insatiable. People will say not only "*crudelis tu quoque mater*," but "*improbus ille puer*." Considering all things, the interference and recommendation of the Crown was some effort, and attended with some hazard; and the beneficial effects are solid: so that, as there is a time for all things under the sun, this is the time for the return of good humour, and I trust it will not be deficient on either side.

The ministerial ranks seemed to have rallied against your Parliamentary Reform; so I suppose it will be lost. I should not object to some measure of that sort, (which the state of Ireland seems to require,) but for its consequential operation in this country, where, though the cases are different, the principle also applies. It is certainly a critical measure, and whatever is done upon it I wish to be proposed from a seat of power, in which alone such measures are susceptible of their due modifications; for this reason, among others, I regret it has been brought on so soon; and if it should not be carried, I trust the *effect* (which is indeed the essence of all political measures) will be produced by salutary regulations of other kinds. What is Ponsonby's plan?

Our war—a necessary war, if ever there was one—is growing every day more popular. Nothing can exceed the spirit of the detachment of Guards we sent off the other day, and the enthusiasm of the people in taking leave of, and in attending them to Deptford. Our accounts from Holland are, on the whole, good, and announce a vigorous and determined defence; and there is reason to hope that the reluctance with which we are engaged in the war, will not be attended with ill effects.

Present my best respects to Mrs. Grattan, of whose amendment, however, you say nothing; I therefore conclude it to be progressive.—Believe me to be, my dear Sir, yours most sincerely, R. Burke.

EDMUND BURKE TO MR. GRATTAN.

Duke Street, March 8th, 1793.

My dear Sir,—I most sincerely congratulate you, and

both these countries, on the final success, in the House of Commons, of the last, and the greatest effort of your genius. Your wonderful abilities were never more distinguished, nor in a better cause. You have restored three millions of citizens to their King and their country: in reality they had not the benefit of either the one or the other; indeed, they were lost to themselves. There was even a circumstance in the melioration of their condition, which made it in some respects worse; as it exposed them more to the jealousy, and made them more the objects of the fears, of the ruling party, without any real strength on their part to oppose to those passions. I speak, you observe, as if, in obtaining thus much for the Catholics, you had obtained every thing. I *do so*, when the title is fully admitted, when an interlocutory decree, leading to a final judgment, is given, the business in effect is done. You have brought things nearer this year to a complete equality in favour of the Catholics, than last session they were to the most parsimonious grant of the elective franchise. If you can pass this bill through the Lords with any tolerable good humour, I shall not only consider the great object as substantially gained, but more usefully gained in this progressive mode, than if nominally more had been obtained with the grudging and ill-will of the predominant party. *Their exclusive liberty, as they possessed it, was not freedom, but dominion, and must naturally produce in them haughtiness by the habit of holding it*, and rancour, and indignation, by the total and immediate loss of it. That description must, and perhaps ought, to possess the sole patronage. Their satisfaction, of course, is of moment. *It would be no great bargain for the Catholics to obtain a capacity for everything, with the enjoyment of nothing at all.*

The great object now remaining is to make this measure of concession on the one hand, and of reservation on the other, subservient to the country, and the strength of the empire. The spirit of jobbing in the principal people must, some way or other, be abated, and kept in some degree of moderation. It will be then more easy to get the better of the mutinous spirit, which is in the very constitution of the lower part of our compatriots of every description, and now begins to ferment, with tenfold force, by the leaven of republicanism which always existed, though without much noise, in the northern parts of the

kingdom, but now becomes more evident, and requires no small degree both of firm and prudent management.

I confess *I tremble for the conduct of the Chancellor,* who seems for a long time past desirous of putting himself at the head of whatever discontents may arise from concessions to the Catholics, when things are on the very edge of a precipice, or indeed between two precipices; he appears resolved that they shall be tumbled headlong down one of them.* Surely, of all virtues, temper more eminently belongs, than any other, to that *balancing* office; whatever other qualities or talents unite in that noble and learned person who holds the great seal, temper does not shine with any remarkable brilliancy.

All this depends upon having a Government. *Government seems to be a thing given up in Ireland. During the interregnum, the vacant place is filled by one man, who appears rather as a great and steady minister, than a leader of opposition: without his virtue and constancy all would have gone to ruin*†—"Patriam tutore carentem accepit." It is unpleasant to be obliged to contrast his conduct with that of a great leader of party on this side of the water. ‡

It gives me great consolation, among a thousand vexatious circumstances, to reflect, that my son, who is so much devoted to you, has been of some use as pioneer to you, who, as a great general, have conducted the operations of the campaign. In his two journeys to Ireland he has done his best, and he has employed himself as a solicitor, or rather as a *dunn*, with Ministers, both by verbal representation and memorials on this subject; and perhaps has been of some use in removing prejudices and obviating objections.

Present Mrs. Burke's and my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Grattan; and believe me ever, with the highest possible respect and regard, my dear Sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

* Fitzgibbon, Lord Clare. † Mr. Grattan.
‡ Mr. Fox; but at this period he and Mr. Burke had quarrelled.

CHAPTER V.

Parliamentary Reform — State of representation — History of Irish boroughs—Wm. Ponsonby supports Reform—Mr. Grattan moves for a committee—Mr. Corry's amendment—Mr. Grattan's resolutions —Sir John Parnell's carried—Mr. Toler's motion — Stewart (Lord Castlereagh) speaks in favour of it—Measure lost—Bad effect in Ireland — British Corresponding Societies — Artifices of Mr. Dundas (Lord Melville)—Formation of United Irishmen—Counter association by the Duke of Leinster—Parties in Ireland—Disposition of her governors, and conduct of Lord Clare—French Revolution—Death of Louis XVI.—War with England—Defenders—Report of Lords' Committee—Catholics cleared of the charges against them—Proclamation by Government—Lord Edward Fitzgerald's speech—Volunteers dispersed—Their cannon seized—Arms and Gunpowder Bill—Sir Simon Butler and Oliver Bond imprisoned by the House of Lords —Convention Bill—Place, Pension, and Barren Land Bills—The hereditary revenue yielded by the King—End of Session, 1793—List of placemen.

The other important question that engaged the attention of Parliament this year was the reform in the representation. This subject had greatly agitated both kingdoms of late; but as regarded Ireland, it had lain dormant in Parliament since 1784, when Mr. Flood had a second time proposed his bill on the subject. The resolutions of the people, their requests and remonstrances, were alike unheeded, and a deaf ear had been turned to their complaints; but the injurious impression made by the armed convention of 1783 had either been effaced or forgotten, and the question was now revived with a greater likelihood of success. It was, however, taken up rather late, and was supported with insincerity by the Government.

It is to be observed, that in the Irish represen-

tation, the people formed no part of the Constitution; there was no such body as what the French called "*Tiers etat*," and what the British Constitution called *the Commons*. The Irish had a king, a chamber of nobles, and another chamber, elected by the nobles, and supported by the Government and the Crown; and the result of this combination amounted to the establishment of a court cabinet over Ireland, and the transfer of legislation to England.

The detail of the state of Irish representation at this time is curious, very mortifying, not very interesting. Of 300 members of Parliament, 200 were chosen by 100 individuals; so that of these, each individual had on an average *two* representatives. Near 50 of the 200 were elected by 10 individuals; so that, of these, each man had five representatives. This oligarchy was as little the representative of property as of population. 200 of these members were returned by persons whose property did not average above 4000*l.* a-year;—this, too, in a country whose grants were above 3,000,000*l.*, and whose rental was calculated at 6,000,000*l.* They received in stipend from the Crown an income bearing a great proportion to their own property; so that they were an oligarchy taxing for their own provision, and representing nothing but their dependency.

In addition, the Minister had found out the art of buying their boroughs, as well as pensioning their persons. He even trafficked, as has been already stated, the seats of one house to purchase those of another; and by this double operation, the people, without perceiving it, bought the Parliament for the Minister, against themselves! In fact, the Irish Minister was nothing more than the agent of the cabinet of England; and the result of the whole machinery appeared to be a complete

transfer to Great Britain of legislative power, founded on the abuse of every principle, political or moral, on the subversion of the parliamentary constitution of the country, and on the suppression of all native influence, popular or proprietary,—and of public liberty, as well as virtue.

Such a state amounted to a constitution which was not a representation either of property or of population; nor of property and population mixed;—nor was it an aristocracy (which is not the best constitution); nor an oligarchy (which is a bad constitution); nor a despotism (which is perhaps the worst constitution);—but it was the despotic power of another country.

In support of such a state of representation, nothing could be advanced. It could not stand upon its antiquity; on the contrary, it was a recent and an audacious innovation. Forty of the boroughs,—that is, near one-third of the representation, and near one-half of the boroughs,—were made by James I. for the avowed purpose of overturning the parliamentary constitution of Ireland. Afterwards, 37 boroughs were created — one by Anne, two by James II., and the remainder by the two Charles's; so that 148 members—nearly half the House of Commons, and more than half of its efficient members—were fabricated since the accession of the House of Stuart, and by the House of Stuart, the worst house that ever governed England, and, except James II., the worst princes of that house.

The fabrication of those boroughs was for the purpose of subverting the constitution of Parliament, by modelling the representation to the destruction of Irish influence, and the domination of a Court influence in the Irish Parliament. The causes that moved, and the circumstances that attended the creation of 40 of these boroughs by

James, are related by the historian.* It was to model Parliament and destroy the constitution of the realm, by introducing the influence of the Crown into Parliament, in order to oust the people. He states that a number of new boroughs were created, most of them inconsiderable, and many of them too poor to afford wages to their members; that such an accession of power could not fail to encourage the administration to act without reserve, and pursue the dictates of their own passion and resentment. The representatives of these boroughs were the clerks of attorneys, and the servants of the Lord Deputy.

Such was the history of one-third of the representation and one-half of the borough constitution. The remainder were created, except the few of James II. and Anne, by the two Charles's, for the avowed purpose either of conferring personal favour on individuals, or establishing a Court majority in Parliament. This appears from the tenor of the grants, or from the historians and memorialists of the time. Thence it is that the rotten boroughs were justly called abuses in the Constitution. But the mischief was under-rated; for they were gross and monstrous violations, recent and wicked innovations,—not the abuses of the Constitution, but its abolition. So that, with the assistance of a Court Parliament, the King introduced into the realm influence, not civilization, and tampered with and tainted the gentlemen of the country with the arts of venality, and gave the Irish ideas of vice, but not of refinement.

It was in vain to expect that an oligarchy, or a constitution of boroughs, could hold out against the Crown. A few individuals of a nobler nature might distinguish their name, and sacrifice their emolument; but oligarchy must ever be a slave,

* See Dr. Leland's History of Ireland.

—an expensive and circuitous despotism,—a little garrison in the enemy's country, certain to be besieged by the King, and certain to sell the fort, and march out of the old walls without the honors of war. The Irish people were turned out of the House by the family of the Stuarts, to give way to 148 borough members; and they were afterwards obliged by Government to pay, it was stated,* half a million to those very borough members, in order to make them vote against the country. The people were first annihilated by an oligarchy; and when that oligarchy, in the course of years, began to amalgamate, and incorporate somewhat with the country, so as, by certain accidental combinations,† to give the public voice some chance of influence in the House of Commons, that oligarchy was bought in detail to detach it from the common interest, and the people were turned even from the threshold of their own house by a host of placemen and pensioners, who had deserted to the Minister from the nation and the oligarchy, and who afterwards voted new loans and taxes to provide for the wages of their own apostacy.

Such was the state of the Irish Parliament, against which the people so often protested, and which they strove in vain to remedy. At length, on the 14th of January, 1793, Mr. Wm. (afterwards Lord) Ponsonby announced his intention of submitting to the House a motion for reform in the representation of the people. Support from this quarter was remarkable; and after he had spoken, Mr. Conolly rose, and to the still greater surprise of many, declared that he also meant to support the measure, observing that, in 1783,

* See Vol. I. Also Lord Clare's Declaration, 1789, ante Vol. III. p. 388.

† Volunteers of 1779 and 1782.

when the proposition had come from an armed body seated in the metropolis, he had opposed it; but since that period, public grievances had increased, and remedies had not been applied to heal them; he therefore recommended Government to turn their attention to the subject of reform. He added, that he respected Lord Westmoreland as a private individual; but, as a public character, he thought that, for the benefit of the country, he ought to be recalled.

Mr. Grattan, aware of the importance of the subject, and of the additional weight it derived from such influential support, expressed himself as follows, paying a just tribute of praise to the Ponsonby family:—

"Never, since I have sat in Parliament, did I hear words that gave me more satisfaction. I have been near seventeen years a member of Parliament, and never did I hear in this house oratory more convincing or transporting. I feel myself young, and my mind possessed with rapture little known to men of my time of life, except on such an occasion as this. I had myself intended to have brought forth the question of the reform of Parliament, but I did not wish to pre-occupy such a question, for what right had I to earn popularity at the expense of other men? These are the gentlemen who ought to lead in this great question—the men who make the sacrifices,—to them belong the laurel,—be it my humble office to follow on this subject, and to applaud.

> "And while along the stream of time their name
> Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,
> Say, shall this little bark——"

"This is not the first time in which the right honourable gentleman has made sacrifices to the country. In 1769, that gentleman, and all his connexions, were deprived of all their emoluments, for supporting the privileges of this house against an altered Money Bill. In 1789, they were also dismissed, for defending the privilege of the two Houses of Parliament against an unconstitutional and condemned Viceroy;* and now they advance a third time to surrender great power, all their monopolies, and to embark in the vessel of

* Marquess of Buckingham.

the Commonwealth, and fairly and proudly to rise or fall with the fortunes of their country. They judge rightly; their natural situation in this country is so considerable, that whatever family sacrifices they make to the public weal, they must always occupy a prime condition from their property, character, integrity, and talents.

"The question of Parliamentary Reform is now fairly brought forth; it consists, I think, of two parts,—external and internal. The external relates to the creation of the House of Commons; the internal to its corruption. A radical reformation in both is indispensable;—first, it is indispensable that the House of Commons should be chosen by the people; second, that after it is chosen by the people, it should not be bought by the Ministers; in either of these cases, and still more in both, the people are not represented. The House of Commons is not chosen by them; the house is governed by the Minister. The people have not the blessings of the Constitution; they are not represented;—they are deprived of that great and invaluable blessing supposed to be possessed by the electors of this kingdom, the blessing of being represented; and accordingly we find the House of Commons the organ of a will, other than that of the people. This is an abuse so evident and so fatal, that I need not impress it more deeply upon you; indeed you seem fully sensible of it; and now, when the persons interested in the above come forth to you to surrender that interest, who can defend such a mischief or refuse such a sacrifice? I mean, therefore, to move for a committee to inquire into the abuses that obtain in the formation of the representation; but as those abuses are not all, I mean to extend the inquiry to the abuses that obtain in the corruption of that representation, which are both contained in the words abuses of the Constitution. It will not be sufficient, depend upon it, that the House of Commons should be chosen by the people,—it is absolutely necessary that the House, after it is so chosen by the people, should not be bought by the Minister, otherwise the people would have only the trouble to elect men for the Minister afterwards to purchase; and therefore it is, I wish to impress on gentlemen, the necessity of attending to this part of the reform of Parliament, its internal reform, on which the purity of its conduct depends.

In vain may the people send men to Parliament, fairly and popularly elected, if the Minister has a power of giving

those men places and pensions, without number and without responsibility, or, as has been disclosed by one of our Ministers,—a power of charging the nation with half-a-million, or any other sum, however great, to purchase a majority in Parliament. Therefore do not imagine you have secured to the people an adequate, or any representation by giving them a fair and adequate right of choice, if you leave to the Ministers the uncontrolled and indefinite right of bribery. A Pension Bill, Responsibility Bill, are therefore a necessary part of the great system which you are providing to form for your country. The whole must be reformed by a radical measure."

He concluded by moving in pursuance of the notice he had given:—

"That a committee be appointed to inquire what abuses had taken place in the Constitution of the country, and in the administration of the Government thereof, and to report such temperate remedies as may appear most likely to redress the same."

Mr. Corry moved as an amendment—

"That the House should, on that day three weeks, resolve itself into a committee, to inquire into the state of the representation of the people in Parliament."

This step, taken by a member of the Government, augured rather well for the liberties of the people; and if it had been honestly followed up and acted on, would have tended to remove much of the evils complained of, and have silenced the violent party in the country, and satisfied the just wishes of all moderate men.

On the appointed day (the 11th of February), Mr. Grattan again entered into a statement on the subject, and concluded by proposing three resolutions:

"That the representation of the people is attended with great and heavy charges and payments, in consequence of elections, and returns of Members to serve in Parliament, and that said abuses ought to be abolished.

"That of the 300 Members elected to serve in Parliament, the counties and counties of cities and towns, together with the University, return 84 Members, and

that the remaining 216 are returned by boroughs and manors.

"That the state of the representation of the people in Parliament requires amendment."

These resolutions were opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir John Parnell), who moved two resolutions by way of amendment:

"That under the present order of representation, the privileges of the people have been extended, and that the agriculture, the trade, and the commerce of the nation have been promoted.

"That if any plan be produced which shall promise additional benefits without hazarding the advantages that we at present enjoy, it shall be considered to be entitled to the most serious attention of the Committee."

This was on the part of Government an evasion of the subject, and showed that they had no intention, much less any desire, to reform the glaring and acknowledged abuses that existed in the representation.

Mr. Forbes objected to the amendment, as superseding the motion. Mr. Stewart (Lord Castlereagh) strongly supported the question of reform. The Secretary of State (Provost Hutchinson) entered into a long detail respecting the constitution of Parliament, and declared, that the representation required improvement. Mr. Curran supported Mr. Grattan, and said, "Government had proposed strong measures, and they should be accompanied by lenient and popular ones."

On a division there appeared for the amendment, 153—against it, 71.

This subject was renewed in another shape on the 19th by Mr. Forbes, who moved, "That the returning officers should furnish a list of the number of electors in their respective boroughs, and of their respective qualifications." This motion, if carried, would have shown at once the

glaring defects in the representation; it was accordingly opposed by Government, who were much condemned by Mr. Stewart (Lord Castlereagh), for first granting a committee, and then refusing to enquire. He said that this proceeding had brought the public mind into a state of agitation, and that, if the people were allowed to ponder over the vices that existed in the representation, it was impossible to say what course they might adopt. The motion, however, was rejected by 137 to 48, and the committee did nothing.

At the end of the session, on the 9th July, Mr. William Ponsonby being unable to attend, Mr. George Ponsonby, his brother, presented a bill, which was read a first time, and ordered to be printed, for consideration in the next session. It was opposed by Mr. Wesley (Duke of Wellington). This ended the question of Parliamentary reform, much to the dissatisfaction of the people, whose hopes had been first encouraged, and then disappointed. The rejection of this measure was made use of by the violent party at a subsequent period, as the pretext for enlisting under the banners of the United Irishmen, many well-meaning and peaceably-disposed individuals.

It is natural to suppose that the state of foreign and domestic affairs during the four years preceding 1793, had kept the people of both countries in a state of considerable excitement; but the measures pursued by the English on the subject of reform, not only preceded those taken by the Irish, but far surpassed them. In the secret report of the disturbances, laid before the British Parliament in 1797, by Mr. Dundas (Lord Melville), the Irish are unjustly represented as the leaders in the popular proceedings of those times; but the dates of the several reports, particularly that of

1794, disclose the fallacy; and the attempt there made by the Minister, perhaps with a view to his objects as to Ireland, and to effect the long-desired purpose—the extinction of the Parliament.

The British Corresponding and Reform societies were formed in March, 1791; the Irish United Society not till October; thus the Irish people were behind the English in point of time, though far beyond them in point of suffering. It must be observed also, that their grievances had a more solid foundation; for although the representation of the people in the British House of Commons was unquestionably very imperfect, yet that of the Irish, as has been just stated, was infinitely worse.

The Irish people were not a little affected by the declarations of the leaders of the English opposition,* and their approbation of the principles of the French revolution by Mr. Erskine, afterwards Lord Erskine, in September, 1790, by Mr. Sheridan, and above all, by Mr. Fox, who, in April, 1791, speaking of that event said, that he "considered it altogether as the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity in any time or country."†

* It is worthy of remark, that the English were the only nation who addressed the French, and congratulated them on the Revolution. On the 14th of August a deputation of Englishmen appeared at the bar of the National Assembly at Paris, and congratulated them on the proceedings of the 10th of August; they held a festival to celebrate the victories of the French armies, and the toasts given were—"The Republic of France, founded on the rights of man;"—"The Patriotic Societies of Great Britain and Ireland;"—"The abolition of hereditary titles and feudal distinctions;" this last was proposed by an English gentleman, Sir Robert Smith; and both he and Lord Edward Fitzgerald (who unfortunately happened to be in Paris at the time) declared *that they renounced their titles.* In consequence of this, Lord Edward was deprived of his commission in the British army. This was the commencement of his misfortunes; his marriage with the daughter of Egalité did not terminate them.

† These words were spoken by Mr. Fox in the debate of April, 1791

These opinions coming from such authority, fixed the attention, and roused the spirit of the Irish people, who knew and felt that the grievances the country complained of far exceeded any that England or Scotland laboured under.

In the month of October, 1791, a society was formed at Belfast, denominated the United Irishmen. Their resolutions were short and simple; they merely comprised Parliamentary reform, and Catholic emancipation. In November, of the same year, a similar society was formed in Dublin, and similar resolutions were adopted. The test of the association was, a pledge to use their ability to obtain an adequate reform, and as the means thereof to forward a community of rights for Irishmen of all religious persuasions. This was the commencement of that society whose ramifications subsequently extended so wide, and were turned to purposes very different from those which marked its origin, and which were perfectly legal and constitutional. Many respectable individuals were enrolled among its members.

The leading members of the Irish opposition, however, being unwilling to join them, formed in December, 1792, an association, entitled, The Friends of the Constitution, Liberty and Peace. They met in Dublin—the Duke of Leinster in the chair, and passed an address and declaration, in which they protested against the corruption of Parliament, and called for an extension of privileges to the Roman Catholics. Their principles were, an hereditary monarchy, an assembly of

on the war with Russia. They roused Mr. Burke, who got up to reply; but the noise and clamour was so great, that he was forced to give way. Mr. Burke complained afterwards of the treatment he experienced on that occasion from Mr. Fox's party, and the schism between these individuals was much increased in consequence. Mr. Burke's reply was embittered by delay, and his hostility augmented.

nobles emanating from the crown, and a body of representatives chosen by the people; these they pronounced to be the integral, vital, and essential parts of the constitution. They resolved that the representative part of Legislature was not derived from the people by free and general elections; that the permanent peace and welfare of Ireland could only be established by the abolition of all civil and religious distinctions, and by a radical reform in Parliament. The declaration was a promise to promote reform and emancipation, to resist innovation, and to recommend the formation of similar associations.

This society was similar to that formed in London in the spring of 1792, entitled "The Friends of the People," which consisted of many of the most active members of the English House of Commons, who were then in opposition; and the object set forth in their declaration was a more equal representation of the people in Parliament. Mr. Grey,* Mr. Sheridan, and Lord Lauderdale were said to be the founders of it.

Other associations emanated from those of the friends of the Constitution, liberty, and peace, and formed themselves in various parts of Ireland, corresponding with the chief members of the opposition, but they were ultimately superseded by that more active body—the United Irishmen.

Thus the country was divided into various parties:—the Whig club in Dublin and the Whigs of the north; the Catholic Convention and Committee; the Protestant Convention at Dungannon; the United Irishmen in Belfast and in Dublin; and the associations of the "*Friends of the Constitution.*" All these various bodies shook the island from centre to circumference, and showed that some general measures of relief were indispensable. At the

* Afterwards Lord Grey, in whose administration in 1831 the Reform Bill was carried.

same time, sanctioned as some of them were by the names and support of the leading men of the country, the nobles and the aristocracy, they afforded a sure pledge to the Government that nothing illegal or violent would be attempted. The country now required constitutional governors,—men of calm and reflecting minds,—attached to the people as well as to the Crown, and who would not use their imprudences or their follies as a pretext to deprive them of their liberties.

But unfortunately for Ireland, her old friends were no more:—Pery was gone,—Burgh, Flood, and Daly were dead; even Bushe had been dismissed, and Langrishe, though well inclined, wanted weight sufficient to exercise authority or control. The governors of the country were destitute of the necessary qualities for command, and had neither the arts that are best adapted to enforce obedience without an uplifted arm, or to win the affections of the people without a servile condescension. They lacked wisdom, patience, temper, and discretion; they were weak, hot, prejudiced, and violent. Clare, Agar, Carhampton, Beresford, Foster, Carleton, Bellamont, whose names generally appeared at the foot of the proclamations, with Lord Westmoreland at the head, were wholly incapable of managing a people like the Irish: men whose principles would break the peace of a parish were unable to preserve that of a nation.

The conduct pursued by Lord Clare had certainly been the cause of many of the evils that approached. He had revived, at the Regency, the old jealousy in the old quarter, and which of all others was the most exciting, namely, the independency of the Irish Parliament. He increased that jealousy by a doctrine which was profligate in the extreme, namely, that as the British Par-

liament had ceased to govern Ireland by law, the English cabinet should govern the Irish Parliament by corruption; and this he represented as the cause of Great Britain; and by annexing the name of her Government to that vile bribery, and to that base doctrine, he acted more as the enemy of Ireland than the champion of Great Britain. Thence it followed, as a necessary consequence, that by these extremes he brought into activity bodies in opposition to him: he created the Whig Club,—he created the Northern Whigs,—and, lastly, the United Irishmen. All these associations owed their origin to him as their common parent; and in the papers which state these associations, are recited the items of Mr. Fitzgibbon's conduct, as the origin both of their birth and of their grievances.

It cannot be said that, at this period (1793), either the principles or the doctrines of the French revolution had made any progress among the Roman Catholics of Ireland. Their clergy (always sincerely attached to their religion) were terrified at the excesses and cruelties perpetrated on the pastors of their church, and at the open profanation of religion displayed in France. Besides this, the Roman Catholics were never republicans; the Presbyterians and the Protestants of the north were more susceptible, both on account of the nature and sturdiness of their politics and their religion.

The decree of the National Assembly of France, 19th November, 1792, which was ordered to be printed in all the languages of Europe, and which stated that they would grant fraternity and assistance to all people who were willing to recover their freedom; and gave directions to their generals to defend and assist those who suffered in the cause of liberty,—had caught some, but very few

of the Irish,—Wolfe Tone, Hamilton Rowan, Napper Tandy: scarcely any others were affected by it. The French Convention, too, were willing to withdraw it, and had directed their agent Monsieur Chauvelin, to disavow all hostile intentions on the part of France, and to state how averse they were to the idea of a war with England.

The apprehensions of men, however, were not tranquillized when so dangerous a doctrine was propagated,—a doctrine so inconsistent with the peace, the security, and the faith of nations. But affairs were now on the brink of a rupture.

In November of the same year, the Executive Council determined to open the river Scheld, the exclusive navigation of which had been secured to Holland by several treaties, guaranteed too by France, and by a treaty of alliance entered into in 1788 between Great Britain and Holland, which bound them to assist each other in case the territories of either were attacked. This was made the ground for war by Mr. Pitt.

At last the concluding scene was acted. The King and royal family of France, who had been taken prisoners on the 3d of August, 1792, and confined in the Temple, were brought to trial. On the 21st January, 1793, the King was executed, 366 voting for his death, 319 for his detention,—not one for his acquittal!!! On the 28th Chauvelin was ordered to leave London; and on the 1st of February war was declared by France against England; an event that proved the death-blow to the hopes and the happiness of Ireland.

The disturbances which had taken place in Ireland immediately prior to 1793 were confined almost entirely to the north. They were local in their nature, and could easily have been suppressed by the civil power if it had been properly directed. The Defenders were Roman Catholics.

The name of the association denotes its origin: they assembled in order to protect themselves against the depredations and excesses of the Protestant party, called "Peep o'day boys," who broke open the houses of the Catholics, attacked their persons, and destroyed their property. The difficulty of obtaining justice against the aggressors, compelled the peasantry of one party to enter into protective combinations, which, however, soon exceeded all ordinary limits, objects, and moderation.

The agitation of the Catholic question during the years 1790 and 1791, and the conduct of government, had excited the prejudices and passions of the predominant party. The supineness, and perhaps indifference, of the magistrates had also increased the evil; and if an opinion is to be formed from the resolutions commonly called the "Gosford Resolutions," that were adopted in 1796 by Lord Gosford, and a meeting of magistrates, and which stated the cause of the disorders; great blame was to be attached to the local authorities.

In consequence of these disturbances, on the 11th of February, 1793, the subject was brought before the House of Lords. Lord Clonmel stated that several of the disturbers of the peace were emissaries of the French. Lord Farnham complained that money had been collected at the Roman Catholic chapels, the application of which ought to be inquired into. Accordingly, a secret committee was appointed, consisting of the Chancellor and eight Lords. On the 7th of March they made their report, which stated, that the Defenders were Roman Catholics, who were impressed with the idea, that they could assist the Catholic cause. That they complained of hearth-money, tithes, county taxes, and high rents; they appeared in Louth in April 1792; then spread to

Meath, Cavan, and Monaghan; and (as if with a view to connect the Catholic Committee with these disturbances) they stated that money was collected at Catholic chapels by order of the sub-committee, who had also directed inquiries to be made respecting the offences with which the Defenders were charged, and had employed counsel to act for them at the assizes. The report complained of the inactivity of the magistrates, and the great circulation of seditious papers and pamphlets in the north, tending to defame the Government and Parliament. It stated that a body of men had associated themselves in Dublin under the title of "First National Battalion," and that their uniform was copied from the French—green turned up with white. On their buttons was a harp, surmounted by a cap of liberty without the crown. That bodies of men in the north of Ireland were trained to the use of arms, and purchases were made of arms and ammunition. The report concluded by declaring that it was incompatible with the safety of the kingdom, or with public tranquillity, to permit armed bodies of men to assemble without any legal authority, or to permit a self-created representative body to exist, collecting money and levying subscriptions.

This report was clearly directed against the Volunteers and the Roman Catholics; though the latter were not directly charged as being implicated, yet they were mentioned in the report in such a manner that they naturally supposed the intention of the Lords was to implicate them. Lord Portarlington, however, who was a member of the Committee, declared that there was no proof that they had any connexion whatever with the disturbances; and certainly, if any opinion is to be formed from the measures they took, and the declarations they made, the very reverse of

connexion with Defenderism was the fact; for in July 1792, the Catholic Committee had drawn up an address to their brethren of the north, calling upon them no longer to assemble in armed bodies, but to trust to the exertion of their friends, and give up all tumultuous meetings.* Again in

* At a Meeting of the sub-Committee of the Catholics of Ireland, January 2, 1793, Denis Thomas O'Brien, Esq., in the Chair.

The following address to the Catholics of Ireland was agreed to, and ordered to be published :—

The sub-committee appointed by the general committee of the Catholics of Ireland, to transact such business as may be necessary during the adjournment of the latter, feel it their indispensable duty to warn the body at large, against any attempts of pretended friends or declared enemies to mislead them, to drive them into a violence derogatory to their unspotted character of loyalty and obedience to the laws, or subversive of the unanimity which ought to subsist amongst every description of Irishmen.

* * * * * *

The Committee are grieved to hear of the success of designing men, in agitating the minds of the lower order of their persuasion in a part of this country, and filling them with apprehensions of danger from their Protestant brethren, a circumstance which has prompted these unhappy men to arm and stand on their defence. They would wish to impress upon their mind, in indelible characters, that it is the most ardent desire, and the object nearest the heart of every individual in the general and sub-committees, that all animosity between Protestants and Catholics should cease, and lie buried in the graves of their ancestors: that inhabiting one common country, and adoring the same God, the united charities of religion and country may melt us down as one people, and for ever establish a reciprocity of interests and a community of rights.

The Committee trust that the Catholics of Ireland never will, nor ever can forget their obligations to their Protestant brethren, who have stood forward as their advocates and protectors. Should any of their persuasion have well-grounded cause to fear for their lives or liberties, it is their duty to state it, and solicit the protection of Government. Should they request the sub-committee to state their situation, the sub-committees will not be wanting. But they earnestly recommend to the Catholics in general, the continuation of that dutiful and exemplary conduct, which, under circumstances of unprecedented hardship, has for a century made them the admiration of all, who can do justice to and feel for the adversities and virtues of mankind. The world will now see their conduct, and unquestionably their King and country will reward it: for he is a just and gracious King, and Protestants must at least see, that nothing but union at home—a union arising from equal law, and equal liberty, can guard the island from domestic or foreign foes. In this sanguine and well-founded hope, the Committee conjure their Catholic brethren to rest upon their arms, the only arms the hostility of the law cannot take away, the arms of reason and justice; and patiently wait the decision of their fate,—the fate of three millions of aggrieved and loyal subjects. Signed by order, JOHN SWEETMAN, Sec.

January, 1793, they had passed resolutions highly to their credit, and lastly in April of the same year, they published a vindication of their conduct, in reply to the imputations charged against them, as being connected with the Defenders, or levying money for improper purposes. They stated that the expenses of the Catholic Convention had been very great; (one of the secretaries, Mr. Burke, had got upwards of 2,000*l.* and Mr. Tone, the other secretary, shortly after received 1,500*l.* for his services;) so far they cleared themselves of the charge.

Government now proceeded against the Volunteers, and effected the dispersion of the few who remained. In consequence of the imprudence of some of the corps, as alluded to in Mr. Grattan's letter,* and also in the report of the Lords, Government had issued a proclamation in December 1792, directing them to abstain from assembling. This proclamation was taken into consideration by the House of Commons in January 1793, when it was proposed that an address of thanks be presented to the Lord-lieutenant for the proclamation which he had issued, and for the vigilance and attention which he had manifested to preserve the public tranquillity; that they applauded his wisdom in separating those who so laudably associated for the purpose of defending their country from foreign invasion, as well as to preserve domestic tranquillity, from those whose declared objects are tumult, disaffection, and sedition, and to assure him that they would concur in such measures as would carry the proclamation into effect."

Mr. Secretary Hobart read a summons from the Goldsmiths' corps; also the address from the Society of United Irishmen to the Volunteers of Ireland, and the resolutions entered into at a

* Ante, page 74.

meeting of delegates from several of the Dublin Volunteer corps. He said that, from those resolutions, those corps came within the description and meaning of the proclamation. Information had been received that the Goldsmiths' corps intended to parade, and appear in arms. Directions were given to a magistrate to caution them against it, but there was no intention to call out the military in aid of the magistrate, except in case of necessity. He accounted for the proclamation not having been laid earlier before Parliament, and said it was a matter of great satisfaction to find that the conduct of the administration, in this business, had met with the approbation of the other side of the house.

Mr. Grattan spoke for the Volunteers as follows:—

"I approve of the proclamation, as much as I condemn the use which the minister now attempts to make of it. The proclamation arraigned a certain body of men, whom it describes to be an association assuming devices and emblems of disaffection. The minister applies that to the Volunteers of the city and the county, under that colour proposes to disperse them; and in order to justify that project, he produces a formal charge. That charge is confined to two heads: first, a summons purporting to be that of the corps of Goldsmiths, reciting that the delegates of the corps were to assemble to celebrate the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, and the French victory in the Low Countries, and inviting the Goldsmiths' corps to attend. I do not ask how far it was perfectly discreet to celebrate such an event, particularly if we consider the consequences to which such an event might possibly lead; but I ask, was it a ground for dismissing the Volunteers? Do ministers mean to say, that they will disperse all the Volunteers of Ireland who celebrate theFrench victories in Brabant?

"He has read a long address from a society called the United Irishmen, inviting the people of Ireland to assemble in a national convention, and containing an abundance of other matter, and he then produces a succession

of resolutions from some of the corps of Dublin, one of which resolutions returns thanks to the society of United Irishmen. Without giving any kind of approbation to the matter of that address, I must say, that I think a minister would be highly indiscreet and presumptuous who should say, that the Volunteers had by those thanks brought themselves within the description of the proclamation, or that they were guilty of assuming emblems and devices of disaffection, as little should I think him justified in dispersing them merely on account of those thanks.

"I therefore desire, in giving my approbation to the proclamation, to be distinctly understood. I approve of it, because it did propose to disperse the National Guard, and because it did not propose to disperse the Volunteers."

It was on this occasion that Lord Edward Fitzgerald rose, and in a very vehement tone, exclaimed, "I give my hearty disapprobation to that address; for I do think the Lord-lieutenant and the majority of this House the worst subjects His Majesty has." This excited great confusion; the House was cleared; he was called on to explain himself. His explanation was held unsatisfactory and insufficient. He was ordered to attend at the bar the ensuing day, when an explanation rather more ample was at length accepted.

Government proceeded now to adopt active measures. They proposed an Arms and Gunpowder Bill,* to prevent individuals from importing arms or gunpowder without license, or remove them from one part of the kingdom to another, or keep more than four pounds of powder or any cannon or ordinance without a licence from the Lord-lieutenant. It enabled any justice of the peace to enter and search any house or person on suspicion that arms or gunpowder were

* Mr. Moore, in the Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, stated that Mr. Grattan faintly (if at all) opposed this bill. On the contrary, Mr. Grattan not only opposed it, but gave notice of a motion to prevent its execution.

kept there. This bill was the commencement of that code of laws which has lasted to the present day, and which is not to be found upon the statute-book of England or of any other country. By means of this law, and the proclamation already alluded to, Government disarmed and suppressed the Volunteers; they sent the military to seize the field-pieces of several corps within three days after the bill had received the Royal Assent; they seized the artillery of the Liberty corps; they made a private arrangement by which they got possession of that belonging to the Merchants' corps; they induced the Lawyers' corps to give up possession of theirs, first making a public procession before they were surrendered. In the north, however, some of the corps are said to have been less compliant, and buried their cannon rather than surrender them.*

The House of Lords showed no unwillingness to assist the objects of Government; and on the 1st of March the society of United Irishmen, having published some remarks on the Committee of the House of Lords, the latter summoned before them the individuals whose names appeared to the document,—the Hon. Simon Butler, (who had become remarkable for his opinion given in favour of holding the Catholic convention,) and Oliver Bond. They were brought to the bar; and for an alleged breach of privilege, (as stated in the resolution,) in questioning the authority of the high court of Parliament, and tending thereby to a breach of the peace, they were fined

* The police seized one of the Dublin Rangers as he was marching with his corps. This was resented by his comrade, who struck the inspector with his firelock. Immediately a party of cavalry and infantry were dispatched from the Castle; they followed the Volunteers; but by the prudence and forbearance of the latter, the collision was avoided. The Government then seized all the fire-arms that could be found.

500*l.* each, and sent to prison, where they remained for a period of six months. This severe proceeding, however, only served to exasperate the people; and on their liberation from prison, on the 16th of August, they were hailed by the addresses of their fellow-citizens.

Another individual, Doctor Reynolds, whom the Committee examined, and who refused to answer some questions which had been proposed to him, was also committed to gaol for a breach of privilege.

In the north, the disturbances were not confined to the proceedings of the Defenders. In the first week of March, a party of the 17th Dragoons came into Belfast with drawn sabres, and cut down the signs of Mirabeau, Dumourier, Franklin, and Washington; insulted and wounded several of the inhabitants, and broke the windows of their houses. One man, who was a chief sufferer, shewed a sturdy spirit on the occasion; and when the riot was over, put up a new sign, with the words underneath, "M'Cabe, an Irish slave."

Government now brought in a bill to raise 16,000 militia; they increased the regular army from 12,000 to 17,000 men; and as a counterpoise to their measures of concession, and to nullify, as it were, their liberality to the Catholics, they introduced the Convention Act,—the climax of all their strong measures, and one that was evidently intended to put a stop to all popular exertions throughout Ireland. It prohibited the election or appointment of conventions or other lawful assembles, *under pretence* of preparing petitions to the King or Parliament. Its real object was to prevent the Reform, and stigmatize the Catholic Convention. The pretences for passing it were the Defenders, the United Irishmen,

and a supposed Convention that was to assemble in Athlone in favour of Reform. The latter, however, had been abandoned, and the bill would have no operation upon the two others. It originated in the Upper House, and was brought in by Lord Clare on the 8th of July. It passed there in the short space of four days, opposed only by three Lords—Leinster, Charlemont, and Arran — and on the 13th it was sent to the Commons. The Opposition in vain opposed the measure—Ponsonby, Curran, Hardy, Duquery, Doyle, and Brown.

Mr. Grattan characterized the bill as it deserved; he pronounced it to be an "*anti-whig and anti-constitutional measure, and the boldest step that ever yet was made to introduce a military government.* If this bill had been the law of the land, four great events could never have taken place—the independency of the Irish Parliament; the emancipation of the Irish Catholics; the revolution in Great Britain; and the great event that flowed from it — the succession of the Hanoverian family." He moved that the bill be read on the 29th of September; the motion was lost by 27 to 128. Major Wesley (Duke of Wellington) was teller for the bill. Mr. Grattan strove to limit its duration to one year. He said, that as he had been against the excesses of some of the people, which shook the principles of Government, so now he was against excess on the other side, which shook the principles of liberty. He considered the bill to be a compound of dislike to the people in general, and the Catholics in particular. This effort proved fruitless, and the bill passed without any amendment.*

* In 1812 this Act was called into operation against the Roman Catholics, and threw the whole country into law, confusion, and discontent.

One of the chief measures of the session was the bill which limited the pension list to 80,000*l.* a-year.* The King surrendered his power over the hereditary revenue of Ireland, and accepted a fixed sum for his civil list, which was not to exceed 225,000*l.*, and no pension greater than 1,200*l.* a-year was to be granted to any but the Royal family. Mr. Forbes succeeded also in his Place and Pension Bill, which, though altered from the original form, at length was adopted. It excluded from Parliament all individuals who held offices of profit under the Crown, and on acceptance thereof subjected them to re-election: but he strove ineffectually to disqualify persons employed in the revenue.

The merit of carrying this measure belonged to the exertions and integrity of Mr. Forbes. The question had been much agitated of old in Ireland; it had been brought forward prior even to the accession of George III., and was long the subject of Doctor Lucas's expostulations and harangues; then of Mr. Flood's ardent eloquence and strenuous labours; and lastly, of Mr. Forbes's calm and steady perseverance; — but it took near half a century to carry; so tedious are the contests, and so hard-earned are the victories obtained by the people!

The other important measures that passed were the Barren Land Bill of Mr. Grattan, which exempted from tithe for seven years all lands

* When Mr. Banks, in 1812, proposed, in the Imperial Parliament, his bill for retrenchment, he attacked this measure by proposing to reduce the Irish Pension List to 40,000*l.*, and on a division he was defeated only by two votes,—those of Mr. Grattan and Mr. George Ponsonby. They contended that a contract had been made with the Crown, and 300,000*l.* given to get the Pension List fixed at 80,000*l.* a-year, and having made the agreement, they conceived it should be kept. In this opinion they were certainly right; for it is an unwise thing to set the example to kings of *popular infidelity;* it is one that will surely be turned against the people.

newly reclaimed, and the bill permitting the trade of Ireland with the East Indies under certain regulations.* These and the Catholic Bill were the beneficial results of this very important session, which terminated on the 26th of July.†

* A proviso was introduced into the bill, directing that if by any arrangement with the East India Company the trade was opened to Great Britain, it should only be carried on by Ireland, subject to the duties that were to be paid in England. On this occasion Mr. Forbes distinguished himself by a most able and luminous speech.

† This list shows the influence of the Crown in Parliament, and the necessity of Mr. Forbes's bill:—

In the Military Department.

Robert Wynne—Clerk of Ordnance Deliveries.
R. Archdall—Secretary to Ordnance.
Hon. John Stratford—Agent for regiments abroad.
Thomas Burgh—Treasurer of the Ordnance.
E. Cooke—Secretary to the Military department.
Eyre Coote—Lieut. Col. of Foot.
Francis Cradock—Quarter-Master Gen. and a Lieut. Col. of Foot.
Rt. Hon. J. Cuffe—Commissioner of the Barracks.
Right Hon. H. T. Clements—Constable of Dublin Castle and agent for military pensions.
R. H. R. Cuningham—Commander-in-Chief, a General, a Colonel of Dragoons, and Governor of Kinsale fort.
Peter Daly—Governor of the garrison of Galway.
Hon. Robert Taylor—Lieut.-Col. Dragoons.
John Doyle—a Lieut.-Col. Commandant.
Charles Eustace—a Major-Gen. and Deputy Quarter Master.
Lord Charles Fitzgerald—Muster Master General.
Stephen Freemantle—a Lieut.-Col. and Deputy Adjutant General.
Wm. Hancock—Commissioner of Barracks.
John Hely Hutchinson, jun.—a Lieut.-Col.
Hon. Geo. Jocelyn—a Commissioner of Barracks.
Hon. John Knox—a Lieut.-Col. and Major of Foot.
Robert Langrishe—Superintendant of Barracks.
Richard Magenis—Captain of Invalids.
Eyre Massey—a Lieut.-Gen., and Colonel of Foot.
John Moore, jun.—Secretary to the Master of the Ordnance.
Arthur Ormsby—Lieut.-Col. of Dragoons.
Hon. Thomas Pakenham—Surveyor of the Ordnance.
Hon. Henry Pomeroy—a Commissioner of Barracks.
George Sandford—Barrack-master of Dublin.
Hon. Henry Skeffington—Governor of the Garrison of Cork.
Hon. William John Skeffington—Constable of Dublin Castle.
Nicholas Loftus Tottenham—a Captain on half-pay.
John Ormsby Vandeleur—a Major of Dragoons.
Thomas P. Vandeleur—a Major of Dragoon Guards.
Hon. J. Butler Wandesford—a Captain of Dragoons.
Hon. Arthur Wesley—a Lieut.-Col. of Foot.

In the Law Department.

Wm. Burton—Custos Rotulorum of the county of Galway.
Humphrey Butler—Clerk of the Pipe.
James Chatterton—Second King's Serjeant.
Charles Henry Coote—a Commissioner of Accounts.
Henry Cope—Accountant-General of Chancery.
Maurice Coppinger—a Commissioner of Appeals.
Robert Day—Chairman of Kilmainham Sessions.
Rt. Hon. James Fitzgerald—Prime Sergeant.
Alexander Hamilton—Cursitor in Chancery.
Rt. Hon. Viscount Jocelyn—Joint Auditor General.
John Macartney—Deputy King's Remembrancer.
Richard Nevill—a Commissioner of Accounts.
Rt. Hon. Sir Lucius O'Brien—Clerk of the Crown, and Hanaper.
Rt. Hon. George Ogle—Register of Deeds.
John Reilly—a Commissioner of Accounts.
Edmond Stanley—Third King's Serjeant.
Edmund Tighe—Comptroller of the Pipe.
John Toler—Solicitor-General.
Rt. Hon. Arthur Wolfe—Attorney-General.

In the Revenue Department.

Hon. R. Annesley—a Commissioner of the Revenue.
Samuel Hayes—a Commissioner of Stamps.
Jonah Barrington—Clerk of the Ship Entries.
Rt. Hon. John Beresford—First Commissioner of the Revenue, &c.
John C. Beresford—Register General of Tobacco.
Marcus Beresford—First Taster of Wines, &c.
Theophilus Blakeney—Collector of Dublin Excise.
James Blaquiere—a Surveyor General.
Rt. Hon. Sir John Blaquiere—Alnager of Ireland.
Rt. Hon. Sir H. Cavendish—a Commissioner of Treasury.
Rt. Hon. W. B. Conyngham—Commissioner of Treasury.
Isaac Corry—a Commissioner of the Revenue.
Hon. Abraham Creighton—Register of Forfeitures.
Edward Fitzgerald—a Commissioner of Stamps.
Sir H. Hill, Bt.—Collector of Derry and Coleraine.
Peter Holmes—a Commissioner of Stamps.
Richard T. Herbert—a Commissioner of Stamps.
Hugh Howard—Treasurer of the Post-office.
Robert Johnson—Counsel to the Revenue.
Rt. Hon. Theophilus Jones—Collector of Dublin Port.
Francis Leigh—Collector of Wexford.
Hon. John Loftus Loftus—Cashier of the Exchequer.
Rt. Hon. Sir H. Langrishe—a Commissioner of Revenue.
Rt. Hon. J. M. Mason—a Commissioner of Revenue.
William Montgomery—Inspector General of Excise.
Stephen Moore—Accountant General.
Rt. Hon. Sir J. Parnell, Bt.—Chancellor of Exchequer.
Wm. Pennefather—Collector of Athlone.
George Rawson—a Commissioner of Stamps.
Hon. Rt. Rochfort—Surveyor of the King's Lands.
Robt. Ross—a Commissioner of the Revenue.
Hon. Chichester Skeffington—Collector of Belfast.
John Staples—Examinator of Customs.

Henry Stewart—Accountant General of Post-office.
Charles Tottenham—Collector of Ross.
John Tydd—Paymaster of Corn Premiums.
John Wolfe—a Commissioner of the Revenue.
Owen Wynne—Collector, Sligo.
Mount. Longford—Weighmaster, Cork.

State and Miscellaneous Officers.

Sylvester Douglas—Secretary to his Excellency.
Patrick Duigenan—Judge of the Prerogative Court.
Warden Flood—Judge of the Admiralty.
S. Hamilton—Secretary for the Civil Department.
Rt. Hon. J. Hely Hutchinson—Secretary of State.
Wm. Mecke—Steward of the Household.
Sir Boyle Roche—Gentleman Usher.
Sir Rich. St. George—Register of the Order of St. Patrick.
Nath. Warren—First Commissioner of the Police.

Many of the above had offices in several departments.

PENSIONERS, who are *not placemen.*

Ponsonby Tottenham	£300
Sir William Godfrey	300
Sir John Stewart Hamilton . . .	300
Hon. John Massey	400
Sir Richard Johnston	800
Thomas Nesbit	500
Sir James May	300

Recapitulation.

In the Military department . . .	36
In the Law department	19
In the Revenue department . . .	38
State and miscellaneous	9
Pensioners	7
Placemen and pensioners . .	109

CHAPTER VI.

Irish Parliament meets, January 1794—Mr. Grattan supports the war against France—Sir L. Parsons's motion opposed by Mr. Grattan—His reasons—Mr. Ponsonby—Reform Bill—Mr. Grattan's speech in favour of Bill—Rejected—Parliament prorogued—Death of Richard Burke—Edmund Burke's advice to the Catholics—His letter to Mr. Grattan — Proceedings of United Irishmen and Defenders — Mr. Hamilton Rowan—Mr. Tone — Mr. Jackson — Conduct of Government—Mr. Grattan applied to, to form part of new administration and refuses—Letter of Lord Fitzwilliam—Goes to England—Interview with the Duke of Portland—Dinner with Mr. Pitt—Denis Daly—W. G. Hamilton and Serjeant Adair's opinion of Mr. Pitt—His interview with Mr. Grattan—He agrees to grant the Catholic question—Letters of Mr. Grattan and Lord Fitzwilliam—Accepts office of Lord-lieutenant—Mr. Grattan's interview with the Duke of Portland—Jobs complained of—Breach of faith—King's levee—Conduct of Mr. Pitt.

THE session of 1794 opened on the 21st of January, with a congratulation from the Throne, on the successes abroad,* and the suppression of disturbance at home. This was accompanied by a declaration, that the King had full reliance on the loyalty and attachment of the Irish in supporting him against the unjust aggressions of France. On this occasion, Mr. Grattan adopted a line of conduct most likely to prove advantageous to Ireland, but which was not wholly approved of by some of the opposition, who were not so decided in their opinions as to the extent

* On the 8th of March 1793, the Duke of Saxe Coburg defeated the French, relieved Maestricht, and drove them beyond Aix-la-Chapelle. On the 17th Clairfait defeated Dumourier at Neerwinden, which decided for this year the fate of the Low Countries; and on the 23rd of May the allies and the Duke of York attacked the French camp at Famars, killed their general, and defeated their army. They then invested Valenciennes, which on the 26th of July surrendered to the Duke of York.

that Ireland should go in the war against France. Mr. Grattan took a different view of the question from some of his friends, as he did at a subsequent period in 1815, and thus expressed himself:

"With respect to the principle of conduct which should always actuate Ireland, I have ever had, and shall ever continue to have but one opinion,—that Ireland should improve her Constitution, correct its abuses, and assimilate it as nearly as possible to that of Great Britain; that whenever Administration should attempt to act unconstitutionally; but above all, whenever they should tamper with the independence of Parliament, they ought to be checked by all the means that the Constitution justifies. But that these measures, and this general plan of conduct should be pursued by Ireland with a fixed, steady, and unalterable resolution to stand or fall with Great Britain. Whenever Great Britain, therefore, should be clearly involved in war, it is my idea that Ireland should grant her a decided and unequivocal support, except that war should be carried on against her own liberty."

On the 5th of January, Sir Lawrence Parsons moved that copies of the conventions and treaties with the different powers relative to the war, should be laid before the House. His motion was supported by Serjeant Duquery, Doctor Browne, Messrs. Tighe, Curran, Egan, and Stewart (Lord Castlereagh). Mr. Grattan opposed this motion, conceiving it tantamount to telling France that Ireland had not made up her mind as to the war, and inducing her to intrigue with the people, and make a descent upon the country. Mr. Grattan added, that on the subject of the war, Mr. Curran's sentiments coincided with his own. The motion was rejected by 128 to 9.*

The Bill of Reform that had been proposed by Mr. Wm. Ponsonby, in the last session, was read a first time on the 4th of March. It added thirty-

* *Colonel* Arthur Wesley (Duke of Wellington) was one of the tellers on this division.

four Members to the representation, and enlarged the boroughs to an area of twenty-four miles in circumference, thereby taking them from the aristocracy, and opening them to the people. Unfortunately, however, this useful and necessary measure was not destined to pass. Arguments against it were adduced from the disturbed state of affairs abroad, and from the danger of giving more power to the people. Accordingly, the Bill was opposed by Sir Hercules Langrishe, who moved that it be read a second time on the 1st of August. The amendment was supported by Mr. (afterwards Sir Jonah) Barrington, Mr. Fox (afterwards Judge Fox), and Sir John Parnell, Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was opposed by Curran, Jephson, Tighe, Browne, Parsons, Ponsonby, and Conolly. Mr. Grattan strongly supported the bill. He said, that freeholders, leaseholders, and all trading interests, were now only spectators of the parliamentary Constitution, but under this bill they would become parties; at present they returned only one-fifth of the House, but by the bill* they would have the entire return,

* Each county was to return three instead of two knights of the shire; cities of Dublin and Cork to return three members each.

Districts of cities and borough towns to be enlarged to a radius of four miles, or a circle of about twenty-four miles in circumference.

£10 freeholders within such district of any city, town or borough to have a vote, provided they held their freeholds for one year, and registered six months previous to election.

No freeman of any corporation elected such after passing this Act to have a right to vote unless seised of a freehold of *5l.* yearly value, on which he or his family shall have resided for *one year* previous to election; this not to extend to those who are freemen or have a right to be so previous to the Act.

Every person who has served five years at any trade within the districts shall have a right to vote.

Member before he takes his seat in Parliament shall declare on oath that it has not been procured by bribery of any kind.

Act not to extend to cities of Waterford, Kilkenny, Limerick and Londonderry, they shall retain their rights as usual.

This was a much wiser plan of Reform than that adopted in England in 1831 by Lord Grey and Lord John Russell, which was so clogged by forms of registry, payment of rates and taxes, and tenancies at will, that the beneficial result of the measure was in a great degree frustrated.

and become proprietors. His speech was remarkable for its comments on the British Constitution, on the proceedings in France, and the danger of suffering popular abuses to accumulate to such a height as they had in Ireland; but he very wisely expressed his disapprobation of the plan of personal representation, and the extravagancies which some of the popular societies in Ireland had indulged in, and which he cautioned the people to beware of.

"My right honourable friend* says, Why agitate the people now? We have not created; we have found the agitation of this subject, and therefore the question now is, not whether we shall agitate or abandon this subject; and sure I am that we should agitate the people much more by renouncing than by pursuing their great object—a more equal representation of the people. We should then leave them at large on this subject to their own despair, or to those desperate suggestions which every seditious bungler may propose, while the abuses of your representation, abandoned to such hands, make every quack a doctor, and every fool a philosopher. Sir, it is the excellence of our constitution, that it contains within itself the seeds of its own reformation, and to this excellence I attribute its duration. Other countries have preserved abuses until they accumulated, and were finally levelled but by the establishment themselves, by the deluge of anarchy, instead of being removed by reformation. * * * *

"'But,' says the right honourable baronet, 'France! take warning from France.' If France be a lesson, take the whole of that lesson; if her frantic convention is to be a monitress against the vices of a republic, let the causes which produced that convention be an admonition against the abuses of monarchy. France would reform nothing, until abuses accumulated, and government was swept away in a deluge—until an armed force redressed the State, and then, as will generally be the case, united on becoming the Government. It was not a progress from reformation to innovation, but from one modification of a military government, that is, of one anarchy to another.

* Sir Hercules Langrishe.

In principle, therefore, the case of France does not apply; in policy, still less; for sure I am that *if there is an attempt to introduce the rebellious traces of a republic into these countries, the best precaution is to discountenance them by the sober attractions of a limited monarchy*, and the worst precaution is, to preserve all the abuses of the latter, to pre-engage men against the vices of the former. * *

"Liberty was not best defended as the Commons became an aristocratic power, but as aristocratic wealth and feudal principality were alienated, melted, and diffused among the Commons: not as the Commons ceased to be Commons, but as great men became Commons by alienation, and small men became such by commerce; as the Commons grew in wealth, the better to combat that aristocratic influence, and not as they themselves became a part of that influence, and ceased to be Commons. To the aristocratic power which the patron of abuse would set up as the bulwark of freedom, must we attribute the fall of freedom and the catastrophe of kings. To this must we attribute the Barons' war and five depositions, and to the diminution of that power are we to attribute the Bill of Rights and the Revolution, both carried in the Commons against the alterations and interpolations attempted by this aristocratical interposition and influence. It is true, though the power of the baron is gone, the influence of the borough patron remains; and therefore, though there is no civil war, there will continue to be faction. For wherever the powers of the constitution fall into the hands of an oligarchy, the Crown and the people must alternately capitulate; the one for his freedom, the other for his prerogative; and if I were to come to any general conclusion on this part of the subject, it would be, that the disturbance of government has been the effect of this prevalence of oligarchy, and the freedom of the people the effect of its decline. Worse even than the abuses so defended, is a plan I have seen for their reformation—personal or individual representation.

"The principle of such a plan is a complete, avowed, and unqualified departure from the vital and fundamental article of the British constitution in practice and in theory; and I must say, such an outset requires no small degree of mischievous and senseless temerity. * *

"Such we have seen in France on a similar experiment. There were two models for those who undertook to reform

the Legislature—the principles of the British constitution, with all its prosperity; the confusions of the French, with all its massacres: deliberately have the authors of the plan of personal representation preferred the latter! * Their plan at another time had been only evidence of utter incapacity; at this and with the circumstance of its most active circulation, it is a proof of the worst intentions: their plan is an elementary French constitution; as such I would resist it; as such, as long as there is spirit or common sense in the kingdom, we will all and for ever resist it; but though the perpetration of the design you may defy, the mischief of the attempt you must acknowledge. It has thrown back for the present the chance of any rational improvement in the representation of the people, and has betrayed a good reform to the hopes of a shabby insurrection. There are two characters equally enemies to the reform of Parliament and equally enemies to the government—the leveller of the constitution, and the friend of its abuses: they take different roads to arrive at the same end; the levellers propose to subvert the King and parliamentary constitution by a rank and unqualified democracy; the friends of its abuses propose to support the King and level the Parliament, and in the end to overset both by a rank and avowed corruption. They are both incendiaries; the one would destroy government to pay his court to liberty, the other would destroy liberty to pay his court to government; but the liberty of the one would be confusion, and the government of the other would be pollution. Thus these opposite and bad characters would meet at last on the ground of their common mischiefs—the ruins of the best regulations that ever distinguished human wisdom—those that limit the power of the Crown, and those that restrain the impetuosity of the people. * *

"See how the constitution, by borough, and not representation, worked previous to the Revolution: it scarcely worked at all. Of the last century, near eighty-five years, at different intervals, passed without a Parliament. From 1585 to 1612, that is, twenty-seven years, no Parliament; from 1615 to 1634, nineteen years, no Parliament; from 1648 to 1661, thirteen years, no Parliament; from 1666 to 1692, that is, twenty-six, no Parliament. Before the Revolution, it thus appears, that with the rights and the

* This was in allusion to the plans of some of the United Irishmen.

name, Ireland had not the possession of a parliamentary constitution, and it will appear, since the Revolution, she had no constitutional Parliament. From 1692 to 1768, near seventy years, almost two-thirds of a century, the tenure was during the life of the King; since that time of limitation of the term, there have been two reforms in the essence of Parliament; but reforms which I shall distinguish from the constitutional reform desired in the bill, by the appellation of anti-reforms. The first anti-reform produced by the Treasury was the creation of a number of new parliamentary provisions in the years 1769, 1770, and 1771, for the purpose of creating representatives of the minister to counteract and counterbalance the representatives of the aristocracy; this anti-reform, or modelling of the Legislature, was emphatically described and authoritatively confessed by a memorable declaration and scandalous justification; and the Government was said to have paid for defeating the aristocratic influence a sum of half a million—a sum which would have bought fifty boroughs to be open to the people, and which the people were declared to have paid to procure a certain number of members in Parliament to represent the minister.

"The second period of anti-reform was in 1789, when the same sum was declared as likely to be expended for the same purpose—for the purpose of buying more representatives of the then minister to counteract the remaining strength of the representatives of the aristocracy; that is, when fifteen new parliamentary provisions were created to procure fifteen new ministerial representatives. Here is the other half million, and here are two anti-reforms which have cost the nation as much as would buy one hundred boroughs—that is, all the boroughs; which (the fifteen new court representatives of 1789 being added to those of 1769, or about that period, and to the gradual additions since) make altogether from forty to fifty new additional representatives of administration, which is a number nearly equal to all the knights of the shire.

"The question is not now whether you will admit the idea of a reform in Parliament, but having submitted to reformation in the shape of abuse, whether you will not now counteract that abuse in the shape of reformation."

Unfortunately for the repose of the country, this useful and necessary measure was rejected, and the motion that the bill be read a second time on the 1st of August was carried by 142 to 44. Thus ended all hopes of constitutional redress and parliamentary reform. The United Irishmen profited by this error, and acquired additional strength and numbers, in consequence of the conduct of the Government, and the mistaken views which they took on this great national question.

On the 25th of March, Parliament was prorogued in a speech of the Lord-lieutenant, expressive of the satisfaction of His Majesty at finding such a feeling of unanimity in resisting the oppressions of France, and stating that the only disturbances existing were those in the south of Ireland, where, in the county of Cork, bodies of men, but unarmed, had met to administer oaths for the purpose of procuring redress for alleged grievances; that Government had issued a proclamation, and by the exertion of the magistrates and the militia, that had now been called out, the spirit of insubordination was quelled.

Before we proceed to the short administration of Lord Fitzwilliam, we may advert to Edmund Burke. At this period he had been afflicted by a severe domestic calamity—the loss of his only son, who died on the 2nd of August, 1794, at the age of 36, just after he had been elected Member for the borough of Malton* in place of his father. As already mentioned, he had taken, under this paternal and careful† guidance, an active part in

* Belonging to Lord Fitzwilliam, who, it was said, would have appointed Burke secretary on accepting the Lord-lieutenancy of Ireland.

† In a letter to his son, 1st of October, 1792, he writes—"As to your clients, (the Catholics) in my opinion, as long as they keep themselves firm to the solid ground of the British constitution, they are safe

the Catholic politics of Ireland. Mr. Burke seems to have been attached to him, not only with a parental but an enthusiastic affection, and to have loved him with more than ordinary feelings; he even sacrificed his better opinion, not only to the judgment of his son, but to his interest also; as, in his statement to Mr. Grattan, he declared that he accepted the pension from Government for the sake of his son, and not for himself.

On the subject of his loss, Mr. Grattan wrote to him, and Mr. Burke's reply was most interesting and affecting. It is to be regretted that Mr. Grattan's letter could not be found. Mrs. Burke searched for it, but in vain. The sentiments and principles of great and good men are worthy of being recorded, as of being imitated. Those which Mr. Burke here points out would be a safe guide to future ministers in Ireland. The feeling of "*humanity*" which he praises would have done honour to a better age than that in which he lived, and to a happier country than that to which they peculiarly applied, and where but a few years afterwards there commenced a species of *defamation and detraction*, amounting almost to *proscription;* where the law ceased to operate; the magistrate failed to act—virtue and morality were extinct; and where the misplaced term of "*loyal men*," and "*loyal Protestant*," procured *indemnity* for outrage, impunity to crime, and became the only *passport* and a sure *protection*.

for the present, and must be successful; but if they have any mistaken theorists to carry them into any thing like the principles adopted in France, they will not only be baffled, but baffled with shame." Again, on 17th October—"Your adversaries are busy every where, and have filled the minds of the people with the idea of a rebellion of the Roman Catholics ready to break out." And again on the 2nd of November, he says—"The junta in Ireland entirely governs the Castle, and the Castle by its representations of the country governs the ministry here; so that the whole evil has originated, and does still originate among ourselves."

EDMUND BURKE TO MR. GRATTAN.

Beaconsfield, Sept. 3, 1794.

My dear Sir,—I am deeply affected with your letter. Nothing could be more generous and compassionate than your attention to those who drag on what is called life, in this afflicted family. I derive no part of my support under my heavy calamity from the oblivion of what I have lost; on the contrary, to hear my son spoken of as he deserves, and so spoken of by a man like you, affords me as much comfort as I am capable of deriving from any human source. You say kind things, with all that fine spirit, point, and originality,* *which others have employed in satirizing the faults or follies of mankind.* They are soothing to my mind, not because on my part they are founded, but because they are a proof of *the sacrifices which great geniuses are capable of making to great humanity.* This instance of your condescension has something healing in it, to a mind deeply wounded by domestic misfortune, and which, when that misfortune came, was sore, and irritable enough, from the sufferings of others, under the unexampled atrocity of the age we live in. Preserve and cultivate that humanity, which in you is the effect both of nature and reflection—without it, the benefit of the greatest ability is, at best, ambiguous.

You talk, my dear sir, of my son's continuing my fame, if he had lived. Indeed, he had a good career, wholly *his own*, before him. I am sure that if it had not pleased God to permit him to be taken from us, just as he had set his foot upon the threshold of public life, instead of his being distinguished by keeping up my reputation as a son, I should have derived all my title to fame, from having been his father. His virtues overshadowed his abilities; what he kept back was known only to those who were in a situation to inspect the magazines that were in his mind. If, for some years past, there was anything in my conduct which can merit your approbation, I faithfully assure you that it has been in a great measure (and in some parts wholly) owing to the counsels of my dear lost friend and adviser, who has paid back to me, and in kind, and with usury, whatever care I had taken in his early education, by becoming, in his turn, my instructor and my guide.

* Mrs. Burke, to whom application was made for this letter, informed me she could not find it.

But that is past. I am retired, and have the less call for his instruction, but the more for his support in retreat and in age. I have now no objects which can employ my mind, but to spin out with second-hand and worn-out materials, the broken staple of this life—*quæ voluerit meminisse—quæ mandaverit exequi*—that is, so far as a mind impaired by age and sorrow will permit, and as a man retired from the busy scene can do, to forward those objects, which I know he had the most at heart. I know that whilst he was removed from the desire of any official situation, there (very far indeed removed from any such thought), his eye was fixed on Ireland to the last hour of his life, *and his eye was fixed on you, as the only man who could serve it essentially.* I ought, perhaps, to come nearer to his idea, by saying, *the only man who could save it. He never spoke to any one on the subject without expressing this sentiment;* nor have I ever spoken, nor shall I ever speak any other language than his, because it was always the language of truth and wisdom. *You have given to Ireland the great, but critical and perilous blessings of liberty and independence.*

It has been your peculiar virtue and felicity that you have preserved your country from the abuse of those blessings.* That these two things should happen to the same man, is a singular instance of the favour of Providence. Government ought not to overlook this designation; and this point I should press, if I was at all consulted, as I have not been, on matters of this sort. Perhaps you will be full as successful by standing on your own ground. You cannot forget, (if you should, others ought not) the great part you acted in the Emancipation of the Catholics; that is, of three-fourths of the people of Ireland. You remember, too, the active and zealous, though very subordinate part, which my Richard acted in that great concern. *He saw with sorrow the systematic pains which were taken, and which, perhaps, still are taken to frustrate the effects of your labours, so far as the union and concord of the nation was to be promoted by them; he saw with sorrow an attempt to demonstrate that a great mass of mankind may be made to feel all the weight and pressure of penal statutes, even after they are repealed,* AND THAT WHEN THE LAWS HAVE TAKEN MEN INTO

* This alludes to the proceedings of the Volunteer Convention of 1783, as well as to the French revolutionary principles.

PROTECTION, THE ILL-DISPOSITION OF THE MAGISTRATE MAY MAKE THEM EXPERIENCE MANY OF THE EVILS OF A PROSCRIPTION.

One of the last things of which we conversed in the chaise as we returned from Malton,* was on the state of education in your kingdom. He was of opinion, that if some course of instruction for that great body of people, (the old Church of Ireland,) especially for their clergy, suitable to the genius, the character, and the exigencies of their religion, is not adopted and supported by the funds, but without the intermeddling of Government, barbarism and Jacobinism will almost certainly enter by the breach made by the atheistic faction in France, in the destruction of the Irish seminaries in that kingdom. D. Walker King† tells me (for I have not yet had the fortitude to look into any of his papers) that he has left some notes on that subject in writing: if you should agree with him in this opinion, you will command my confined ideas, and my feeble endeavours, in any way you please; the thing ought to originate from you, because, in the first place, it will come with great authority—and next, because you will prevent it being made a matter of private emolument for any individual, *or a snare for the people*, for whose benefit the scheme is proposed. At the same time, it is much more our common concern to consider the substance of religion, than the interests of the factions which are formed upon it.

Now that I have touched upon this subject, you will have the goodness to excuse me if I go a little further, and say a word upon what very greatly concerns the cause of religion, order, and morals, and ultimately good government itself, in our Anglo-Irish Church. It is the religion of the higher orders of the people, and of almost all the efficient part of the community. Our universities here and in Ireland are, in the primary intention, seminaries for the Church, and very properly so, in my opinion. Lay institution, though of great importance, is, with regard to those bodies, only secondary in the eye of the founder, and of the policy of the foundation. This order is proper; the laity lose nothing by that just and natural superiority which religion ought to have in all doctrine. Nobody regards and honours the present Provost more

* The place for which the son had just been elected to parliament.

† Bishop of Rochester, an intimate friend of Mr. Burke.

than I do; and I am sure that his energy of mind, and his love of fame, have prevented many of the mischiefs that might have been apprehended from the departure from the statutes in his appointment. But this is "*jus singulare*" at this time. Religion and its ministers ought to be regarded with at least all the honour and reverence which the law bestows upon them. Their natural pre-eminence in education ought to be scrupulously preserved upon every principle of wise policy.

I have said the more on this subject, because I have seen it in the newspapers, and it is reported and credited in Ireland that I have solicited this appointment for myself, and with success. I am very sorry that such a report of me should be believed. I know enough of the University of Dublin to be conscious of my utter incapacity for that employment. I am not statutably qualified for it, and I see no reason whatsoever for granting a dispensation to me, or to any person of my description; but I see many strong reasons against it. Dr. Murray, whom I have not the honour of knowing, is, I hear on all hands, exceedingly fit for the office, having been long Vice-Provost with a high reputation. Others of the Senior Fellows (with some of whom I have a slight acquaintance), are undoubtedly fit for that, or any ecclesiastical station. I wonder how this rumour came to prevail. I do not think that any one in the English or the Irish ministry have thought of me for that office. But the last person who could think of me for it is myself. In the very first paroxysms of my grief, when my excellent friend, Mr. Windham, came to console me, I disclaimed to him my having ever had any thoughts of that object, and authorised him to tell some of our common friends in the ministry my general sentiments on that occasion. I hope there is yet time enough to think of it; for though Mr. Hutchinson is not young, he may yet live for many years, and I wish he may.*

Forgive, my dear Sir, the length of this letter. Age is

* The day after Mr. Burke wrote this letter, the provost died, on the 4th of September, at the age of 74, at Buxton, where he had gone for the benefit of his health. He was interred in Christ Church, Dublin. His funeral was attended by all ranks and classes, and by the fellows and members of the university. All seemed eager to pay the last tribute of respect to such a man as Mr. Hutchinson, who had acted so conspicuous a part in the history in Ireland,— supported the rights and liberties of the Catholic as well as those of the Protestant, and upheld the name and independence of his country.

generally loquacious, and sorrow finds a vent in speaking of its object, and whatsoever relates to it. On this subject were our last discourses. Your humanity has brought this trouble upon you. My afflicted wife, whose loss is not that of an only son, but of such a son, as in that relation had no parallel, is perfectly sensible of the generous sympathy of Mrs. Grattan and of yourself in her terrible feelings; the efforts she makes to support me are inconceivable.

We beg our best respects and most grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Grattan.—Believe me, with the highest respect and affection, my dear Sir, your most faithful and obliged humble servant, EDMUND BURKE.

It is necessary to advert to the proceedings of the Defenders and of the United Irishmen, parties totally distinct and separate. The latter had not made any considerable progress since 1791. Their publications on the subject of Parliamentary Reform and of Catholic Emancipation were long, vehement, and declamatory, and in general injurious to the cause they were intended to advocate. The individuals of that body who first suffered were punished by the House of Lords, not for any political offence, but merely for a breach of privilege. Doctor Reynolds, an active Northern, had been committed to Newgate for refusing to answer some questions respecting the United Irishmen. The Honourable Simon Butler and Oliver Bond were imprisoned for six months, and fined 500*l.* for publishing a paper of the society that reflected on the Committee of the Lords; but this measure, far from appeasing, served only to exasperate the people, and produced no beneficial results whatever; for the exercise of arbitrary power, particularly on that undefined question of privilege, by a body at once accuser, jury, and judge, can never impress the public mind with an idea of impartial justice, and the people will never believe them other than acts of tyranny and oppression. The

present contests seem to have been illegal as well as unconstitutional, and such was the opinion of Mr. Forbes, one of the most upright and independent men of those times, who addressed Mr. Hardy on the subject:—

MR. FORBES TO MR. HARDY.

DEAR HARDY,

THANKS for your note. I can't meet you at Tinnehinch to-morrow. I have engaged deeply in investigating some points, and will not quit my occupation for your shabby society, Sir Frank's, or Harry Grattan's!! I have *probed the questions of the commitments of Reynolds, and of Butler and Bond by the Lords, to the bottom. I am clear that the first is illegal; and am almost, or at least, in a few hours I believe, shall be certain that Butler's is equally illegal.* Are we to have my bills* in substance, or only in name? Come up on Tuesday night; if you do not appear I shall outlaw you; if you do, some roast mutton shall be your reward. Does not Somerville vindicate Russell, Sidney, &c. from Dalrymple's imputations with much ability?

Yours ever,

Dublin, May 25th, 1793. JOHN FORBES.

Defenderism was now spreading through the country, and was assuming a more dangerous character, actuated by the hostility of the two religious sects, and goaded on by a spirit of persecution which had of late displayed itself in a new and fearful manner. Mr. Foster (the Speaker) resided in the county of Louth, where these disturbances prevailed to a great extent, and where also lived one of the oldest and most respected Roman Catholic families of Ireland, that of Sir Patrick Bellew. Mr. Foster had, as already mentioned, taken a strong part against the Catholics in 1792, both in Ireland and in England: the evil consequences of those proceedings, and the danger of inflaming the minds of the people, was quickly felt, and began to affect persons in a

* Place and Pension bills.

lower rank of life, and less scrupulous characters. A creature of the Speaker (whose name it is not necessary to mention), a man of middle rank in society, was said to have planned the wicked proceedings instituted against this ancient Roman Catholic family, conceiving that if such a name was implicated in disturbance, Defenderism, and treason, a great object would be gained by the high-church party, and an effectual blow struck against the Roman Catholic cause. Accordingly, a wretched informer of the name of Murphy came forward and swore against a son of Sir Patrick Bellew, and accused him of being a Defender. The informations were sent to the grand jury, of which Mr. Foster was chairman, and true bills were found against Mr. Bellew, and he was put on his trial; but so invalid and conflicting was the testimony of the witness, that the petty jury disbelieved him, and Mr. Bellew was acquitted. This attack upon the Catholics of the first rank having failed, an attempt was then made upon the middle class, and Messrs. Hamill, Bird, and Delahoyde (merchants), with four other persons of inferior note, were accused by the same individual, and also by another informer (Grimes), of a design to disarm the Protestants, to introduce aid from France, to purchase arms and ammunition, and raise a rebellion in the country. They were tried in April, 1794, at Drogheda; the informers were by most respectable witnesses declared unworthy of belief,—the prisoners were acquitted, the informers were prosecuted for perjury, and one of them transported.

Thus failed the second plot against the Roman Catholics; the feelings of the people were greatly excited, and their indignation kindled to the highest pitch. The impression made on the public mind was most injurious: the connection of Mr.

Foster with the Government, and the part that he had taken in the late transactions against the Catholics, awakened the most dismal apprehensions. This was the commencement of that system of spies and informers that rose afterwards to such a horrid height, when these wretches became both witness and executioner, and sovereign arbiter of life and death. Curran, in describing the system in the trial of Finnerty for a libel, December, 1797, thus addresses the jury :—

"Let me ask you honestly, what do you feel when in my hearing—when in the face of this audience, you are called upon to give a verdict that every man of us, and every man of you, know by the testimony of your own eyes, to be utterly and absolutely false? I speak not now of the public proclamations of informers with a promise of secrecy and of extravagant reward. I speak not of the fate of those horrid wretches who have been so often transferred from the table to the dock, and from the dock to the pillory. I speak of what your own eyes have seen day after day during the course of this commission, from the box where you are now sitting;—the number of horrid miscreants who avowed upon their oaths that they had come from the very seat of Government—from the Castle, where they had been worked upon by the fear of death, and the hopes of compensation, to give evidence against their fellows—that the mild and wholesome councils of this Government are holden over these catacombs of living death, where the wretch that is buried a man, lies till his heart has time to fester and dissolve, and is then dug up a witness.

"Is this fancy, or is it fact? Have you not seen him after his resurrection from that tomb—after having been dug out of the region of death and corruption, make his appearance upon the table, the living image of life and of death, and the supreme arbiter of both? Have you not marked, when he entered, how the stormy wave of the multitude retired at his approach? Have you not marked how the human heart bowed to the supremacy of his power in the undissembled homage of deferential horror?—how his glance, like the lightning of heaven, seemed to rive the body of the accused, and mark it for

the grave; while his voice warned the devoted wretch of woe and death—a death which no innocence can escape, no art elude, no force resist, no antidote prevent. There was an antidote—a juror's oath, but even that adamantine chain that bound the integrity of men to the throne of Eternal Justice, is solved and melted in the breath that issues from the informer's mouth. Conscience swings from her moorings; and the appalled and affrighted juror consults his own safety in the surrender of his victim—

> Et quæ sibi quisque timebat
> Unius in miseri exitium conversa tulere.

Again, in the case of Finny, in 1798, Mr. Curran, in describing the character of O'Brien, the informer, says,—

"Gracious God! is a tyranny of this kind to be borne with where law is said to exist? Shall the horrors which surround the informer,—the ferocity of his countenance, and the terrors of his voice, cast such a wide and appalling influence that none dare approach and save the victim which he marks for ignominy and death!

* * * * * * *

"Have you any doubt that it is the object of O'Brien to take down the prisoner for the reward that follows? Have you not seen with what more than instinctive keenness this blood-hound has pursued his victim? How he has kept him in view from place to place, until he hunts him through the avenues of the Court to where the unhappy man stands now—hopeless of all succour but that which your verdict shall afford? I have heard of assassination by sword, by pistol, and by dagger; but here is *a wretch who would dip the Evangelists in blood!!* If he thinks he has not sworn his victim to death, he is ready to swear without mercy, and without end. But oh! do not, I conjure you, suffer him to take an oath; the arm of the murderer should not pollute the purity of the Gospel; if he will swear, *let it be on the knife, the proper symbol of his profession!!*"

The trials of the Defenders were the first-fruits of the report from the Committee of the House of Lords in 1793, on the charges against the people of disaffection, and of French con-

nexion, which Lord Clare said he had sufficient proof to establish, but in which he signally failed. Another individual, who was now destined to pass through a more severe ordeal, was Mr. Archibald Hamilton Rowan, a gentleman of family and fortune in the north of Ireland, whose conduct, character, and station in society entitle him to consideration. In point of personal appearance and accomplishments, few men could be found equal to Mr. Rowan—none superior: a fine figure, the form of an Athlete, a striking countenance, a noble bust—he seemed modelled for a Hercules; in address, tone and manner he was pleasing and persuasive; he had much more of the courtier about him than the tribune; his mind was talented, playful, and ingenious, and could apply itself to mechanical and mathematical pursuits with as much, if not more ease than to politics, and certainly with better success; he possessed public spirit, and an ardent, but ill-regulated love of liberty; he lacked judgment and prudence, and was vain in the extreme; he wanted foresight and strength of mind, and, in consequence, was duped and deceived, and became not merely a sufferer, but a victim.

There were two curious circumstances connected with the history of this gentleman, and with the offence which he was charged, (namely, the publication and distribution of a seditious libel.) In the first place, he was not the author of the libel; next, he was not the distributor, his expressions at the trial confirm this; when speaking of the paper in question he said, "I honour the head that composed, I love the hand that penned it." It is now well known that the libel was written by Doctor Drennan,* and was distri-

* Dr. Drennan was, however, tried for this and acquitted.

buted by a person of the name of Willis,* an active tradesman in Dublin, and who in appearance was not unlike Mr. Rowan, and in a crowded meeting would easily have been mistaken for him.

In December 1792 he was arrested by a warrant from Judge Downes. He gave bail—remained a considerable time in Dublin, and solicited his trial: his request was not complied with, nor was any indictment preferred against him. At length an ex officio information was filed, and an error appearing in it, Mr. Rowan agreed to waive the objection and abide his trial. This, however, the Government refused. Another ex officio information was then filed against him, and at length the case came on in January 1794, when he was found guilty. The libel was a paper from the United Irishmen, addressed to the Volunteers by the title of Citizen Soldiers, calling on them to arm and form a Convention, to assemble at Dungannon, for the purpose of carrying Roman Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform. It contained an appeal to peace and order as well as to arms and liberty;—if it deserved punishment, it was more from the imprudence it contained than the injury it committed. It was a brawling, mischievous, theatrical performance, calculated to terrify the timid, disgust the moderate, and finally to prevent the Reform of Parliament. For this work of another person Mr. Rowan suffered. He was condemned in a very severe sentence—namely, a fine of 500*l.*, and *two years' imprisonment;* however, after three months' confinement, he contrived to escape.† He first

* I knew this person; a bold, courageous, and spirited citizen.

† An instance of Irish fidelity deserves to be recorded. When Mr. Rowan was waiting in the boat for a fair wind to bring him to France, the sailors had occasion to go on shore, where they got the proclamation for his apprehension. On their return they showed in a very

fled to France, then to America; in his absence he was accused of being a traitor. Lord Westmoreland issued a proclamation, stating he was charged with treason; but when, where, by whom, or if on oath, was wholly omitted. No matter; the object was obtained; his character was blemished, and he was proceeded against as an outlaw. He banished himself to America, but when the Union was passed, he was allowed to return home in 1805. The outlawry was reversed, he pleaded the King's pardon, and remained for the rest of his days a tranquil but firm supporter of Irish liberty.

The next case of importance was that of the Rev. Mr. Jackson, the only trial for high treason that had taken place in Ireland for upwards of a century. The evidence certainly shewed that the French sought to tamper with the Irish, but failed* to establish that any national disaffection or French connexion existed through the country. Mr. Jackson was a clergyman of the Church of England; for some years absent from that country, and residing in France, he had rendered himself remarkable by writing in defence of the Duchess of Kingston against Mr. Foote, who had ridiculed her in some of his farces. By this means he got acquainted with her attorney, a

significant manner that they had discovered who was the person on board; but holding the paper in their hand, they exclaimed, "Here it is; but if the reward was twice a thousand pound, by J—— we shall land him safe at the other side."

* Judge Day, who had gone to the South of Ireland at this period on a mission from Government, was so far from discovering or thinking that any treason then existed, that he speaks of the people in most lenient terms, and in his reply to the corporation of Cork (July, 1794), on presenting him with a silver box, on the occasion, says, "My idea has always been that the *errors of the uninformed multitude are entitled to the tenderest indulgence; that protection, persuasion, and mild control are the means most likely to subdue them to order and law;* and that when rigour must be resorted to, the efficacy of example depends more on the selection than the multiplication of public victims." It would have been fortunate if Lords Camden and Castlereagh had been of this opinion.

man of the name of Cockayne, from whom he had occasionally borrowed money. He now came over as an envoy from France, deputed from the committee of *Salut publique*, to enquire into the state of Great Britain and Ireland, and their willingness to accept the aid of French fraternity, and shake off the yoke of their Government. His views being disclosed to Cockayne, the latter revealed them to Mr. Pitt, who employed him as a spy upon Jackson, and allowed both of them to proceed to Ireland in April 1794, under the care, however, of a King's messenger. So little of treasonable practices between Ireland and France existed at that period, that these parties came over without the knowledge of a single partizan, without any political acquaintance, or even without an introduction to any individual of note. One person alone, Mr. Leonard M'Nally, who had been at the English bar, was acquainted with Jackson, and from him he got an introduction to Hamilton Rowan, then in Newgate, and there first commenced this conspiracy, proposed by a person under the surveillance of Mr. Pitt's spy, in concert with a man secured in His Majesty's gaol, and to whom access could only be obtained by the permission of Government. Nothing could be more foolish or absurd than these proceedings—perhaps as ridiculous as they were mischievous: they certainly shewed how little disposed the Irish then were to join the French; and established the fact, that at this time there was no French party in the country. It was not a conspiracy, but a voyage of discovery in search of treason, under the superintendence of Mr. Pitt, who allowed his emissary to proceed to Ireland, not to detect a conspiracy, but to form one, and thus increase the dupes of one party and the victims of the other—a singular instance of per-

fidy and cruelty. It is right, therefore, to say, that as far as the Irish were concerned,* the only document that proved anything against them was the statement of the situation and disposition of the people of Ireland, which was produced at the trial of Mr. Jackson, and which might have been written by any individual without a wicked intent, and in which there was little matter of a treasonable nature, though certainly there were very strong expressions of a high sense of injury, and great imprudence of phrase. In England no one would have been convicted on such a document; however, in Ireland, where one witness only was required, conviction for treason was more easily procured. This paper was drawn up by Mr. Tone,† and copied by Mr. Rowan in Newgate, for the purpose of being sent to France. Tone was applied to, and declined to be the messenger; upon this, Cockayne made the discovery, and Jackson was arrested. He was indicted in June 1794, but was not tried until April 1795, when he was found guilty, and terminated his existence by poisoning himself in the dock. It was on the discovery of the document in question that Mr. Hamilton Rowan thought proper to fly, more from fear than from guilt. Mr. Tone remained, confessed he had written the document, and being supported by the friendship and interest of Mr. Marcus Beresford, a relation of Lord Clare's, and by Mr. George Knox, he effected an arrangement with Government, and remained in the country until Lord Camden's arrival, when in June 1795 he went to America.

* Gifford, in his life of Pitt, contends that long before this the Irish, and in particular the Catholics, were in connexion with the French; but he adduces no proof whatever in support of his assertion, as in other of his virulent charges against Ireland.

† Mr. Tone's son publishes in his work a document much stronger than that proved by the Crown on his father's trial.

The conduct of the Government on this occasion was singular and deserving of condemnation; they should not have declared Mr. Rowan traitor if they let Mr. Tone pass unpunished, for his offence was the greater of the two; but then Mr. Tone was secretary to the Catholics, and was still connected with the body to which the leading men in the Government were hostile, and whose reputation, as already stated, they had sought to blemish. Thus they left the Catholics exposed to the charge of being connected with seditious characters, knowing that they must suffer thereby in point of reputation, and greatly injure their cause; and though it was incumbent on the Government to prevent the people from involving themselves with bad men and in bad practices, they neglected their duty; hence they were charged with connivance at such machinations, and a desire to let the people commit themselves, and become entangled in a blind species of conspiracy, where there seems to have been more bungling than treason. They did not think Mr. Tone's conduct such as to disentitle him from acting for the Catholics, though they knew he was much more implicated than the man whom they accused of treason and proclaimed, whereas if they had intended to act the part of a sincere and honest Government, they would have cut off all communication between such a man and the Catholic body; but the fact was, they had ulterior objects, and *wished the Catholics to dip in sedition.* Burke's advice on this subject* was wise and salutary; the conduct of Lord Clare and Mr. Foster was negligent and treacherous; Mr. Grattan's was prudent and judicious: he showed more fairness and foresight with respect to these individuals, though he had less means of acquiring a

* See his Letter, page 151, note.

knowledge of their character than the Government: he thought it right to keep the Catholics aloof from that party, as appears from Mr. Tone's private memoirs, where it is stated that Mr. Grattan would not recommend him to Lord Fitzwilliam's administration because he was a United Irishman.

Tone was a man of some ability and great liveliness of mind; he had read lightly, not deeply, but amusingly; he possessed some humour, much mirth, a warm and active imagination, and formed on the whole a most agreeable companion; but he was ill suited to lead a party such as he aspired to govern, and probably never would have succeeded in his object. He strove to unite the Defenders with the United Irishmen, but had neither weight nor influence sufficient for the purpose. Educated for the legal profession, he would have lived quietly, and risen with success under British Government, if he had not ventured upon politics, which destroyed all his fortunes, and cost him his life. After Edmund Burke's son ceased to be secretary to the Catholic Convention, he was appointed; he was active in their committees, and received 1,500*l.* for his services; his fate was tragical;—forced to leave Ireland, he chose also to leave America and proceed to France, where, with great perseverance, he urged the French Directory to send troops to Ireland, in which he was greatly assisted by Lord Clare, whose violent speeches and misrepresentations of the Irish people, were his credentials to the French Government, and procured for his application what he could not of himself have obtained—not only reception, but success. He accompanied one of the expeditions, and in September, 1798, was captured in the *Hoche* frigate, which, along with nine other vessels, appeared under Bompart, off the North coast of Ireland, where they were defeated and dis-

persed by Sir John Borlase Warren. Tone was taken prisoner; he was at that time in the French service, and being invited to a breakfast, along with other French officers, by the Earl of Cavan, who commanded in the district of Letterkenny; was recognized by Sir George Hill. Being thus discovered, he was placed in irons, and sent to Dublin, where, although the law courts were sitting he was tried by court martial; he acknowledged that he was found in arms,—in hostility to the Government of the king,—declared that he was an officer in the French service, and acting under the French flag; he proved his rank of adjutant-general, and produced his brevet from the Directory, signed by the French minister of war. He was tried on the 10th of November by a court of military officers, and found guilty. He asked to be shot by a platoon of grenadiers; but this was refused by Lord Cornwallis, and his execution was fixed for the 12th of November, on which he attempted to destroy himself by severing the jugular artery. In the mean time Mr. Curran applied to the King's Bench on the affidavit of the father, against the decision of the court martial, which he declared to be illegal. The King's Bench being the supreme criminal court of the land, Lord Kilwarden, who was the chief justice, issued his writ of habeas corpus, but neither the provost marshal, Major Sandes, nor General Craig, would obey it. It was, however, found impossible to move him in consequence of his attempt to commit suicide. The court issued an order suspending the execution, and directing that the provost marshal and Major Sandes should be taken into custody. Tone, however, died on the 19th, in consequence of the wound he had inflicted.

We now approach a most important event; one in which Mr. Grattan was personally concerned,

and which had nearly proved most fortunate for Ireland (the Viceroyship of Lord Fitzwilliam); but unluckily it turned out to be the very reverse; and the disappointment occasioned by its failure, and by his recall, greatly increased the national discontent, and produced many of the calamities that afterwards befel the country.

The separation of Mr. Burke and Mr. Fox in politics* had been most unfortunate; it not only took the aristocratic leaders from the opposition, but divided them. Mr. Burke brought over many of the aristocracy with him, and reduced Mr. Fox's party very low; and in his reply to him after their quarrel he spoke in very harsh terms, and the breach became irreparable. Lord Fitzwilliam, the Duke of Portland, Lord Spencer, and some others, followed Mr. Burke; they accepted office, and were told that they would come into power with their party and their measures; it proved, however, to be no such thing—they had but a few of their party, and none of their measures.

In July, 1794, Lord Fitzwilliam was appointed President of the Council; Lord Spencer, Lord Privy Seal; the Duke of Portland, Secretary of State; and Mr. Windham, Secretary at War. An opportunity here presented itself to Mr. Pitt to strengthen his party; not only by dividing, but by degrading his opponents; and he did not fail to avail himself of it, as appears from the conduct

* On the subject of the French revolution, and in the debate on the Quebec bill (1790), the schism between these two celebrated individuals openly broke forth. Mr. Burke considered himself ill-treated by Mr. Fox's friends, and concluded one of his speeches with these remarkable expressions: — "Fly from the French constitution!" Mr. Fox here whispered, "There is no loss of friendship." "I regret to say there is," was the reply. "I know the value of my line of conduct; I have indeed made a great sacrifice; I have done my duty, though I have lost my friend; there is something in the detested French constitution that envenoms every thing it touches." Here ended all friendly intercourse between them.

he observed towards Lord Fitzwilliam, and his friends; the private history was pretty nearly as follows:—

In August (1794), Mr. Denis Bowes Daly, and some of the members of the opposition came to Tinnehinch, on the part of the Ponsonbys, and informed Mr. Grattan of the favourable change which was likely to take place in the Government: they requested of him to use his best efforts to effect their common object; that Mr. Pitt, it was reported, was friendly to Ireland; that he had already shown himself friendly to the Catholics, and had of old declared himself friendly to reform. They urged Mr. Grattan, if their party came into power, to accept office; and pressed him to take that of Chancellor of the Exchequer (one which it must be admitted was not the best suited either to his habits or disposition). He was somewhat surprised at this offer, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer happened to be his intimate friend, and never anxious to accept office, it could hardly be supposed that he would supplant him; accordingly he gave them an ambiguous answer, that he would consider the matter; but in the mean time, he wrote anonymously to Sir John Parnell, apprizing him that his place was in danger, and recommended him to look to it. He was not as sanguine in his hopes as some of the party, and doubted the realization of their wishes. His friend Day was then in London, and to him he wrote as follows:—

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. DAY.

16*th July*, 1794.

My dear Day,—I thank you for your letter, and if you continue in England write to me when you have time—the news, the changes, the probable changes, of the great—of the people. What do you think of the French? *Damn 'em, I wish they were driven out of*

Flanders;* however, at present, that don't seem exactly the turn of things. No news here. I have sprained my hand, and write with difficulty. Yours,

H. GRATTAN.

A letter from Lord Fitzwilliam soon removed all doubt on the subject of a change in the administration, and induced Mr. Grattan to go to London, not indeed with the intention of availing himself of Lord Fitzwilliam's offer to form a closer connexion with the Castle, but to forward the measures which the party had in view, and which they, as well as the people, had pronounced to be necessary for the prosperity of Ireland.

* The success of the allies in the early part of 1793, had been counterbalanced by a series of defeats towards the latter end of that year and the beginning of 1794. The battle of Famars had been fought on the 8th of May, 1793, by the Austrians and Prussians, together with the British and Irish, under the Duke of York. They defeated the French under Dampierre, who died of the wounds he received in the action. On the 22nd of July the Prussians captured Mayence, making General Custine and 17,000 men prisoners; but on the 8th of September reverses commenced. The Duke of York was defeated at Hondschoot, and the siege of Dunkirk was raised. On the 18th of May 1794, the battle of Tournay took place, where the British and Irish troops under the Duke of York, and the allies under Clairfait and the Archduke Charles, sustained a total defeat, the Duke of York narrowly escaped being taken prisoner, and it was only by the great exertions of General Abercromby and General Fox, that his troops effected their retreat and were saved from total destruction. The French were commanded by Moreau, Souham, and Macdonald. On the 26th of June the battle of Fleurus took place, in which the allies were again worsted, and which action secured for the second time the conquest of Belgium to the French. The error committed in the campaign was, that the line of the allies was too extended. Their army was composed of English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, Hanoverians, Hessians, and Austrians. The Duke of York kept his troops apart from the rest. In fact he was no General, and was more fitted to issue regulations at the Horse Guards than orders in the field. It forms a great charge against Mr. Pitt, that he sacrificed the interests of the country to the King, by allowing his son to command the army. If the minister had been punished for his misconduct in this instance, Lord Castlereagh would, probably, have been deterred from sending in 1809, a most inefficient commander (Lord Chatham), to Walcheren, where so many thousand brave troops perished through sickness and fever in the pestilential marshes of Holland. Impunity in the first instance, led to commendation in the second; and the Imperial Parliament was base enough to pass a vote of approbation in favour of Mr. Percival and his ministry for that ill-fated expedition.

LORD FITZWILLIAM TO MR. GRATTAN.

London, Aug. 23, 1794.

Sir—Though I have not as yet the honour of an appointment to succeed Lord Westmoreland, there certainly is great probability of that event taking place very soon. Trusting that neither my connexions nor my principles are quite unknown to you, it seems almost needless to say, that upon entering upon the administration of the affairs in Ireland, I shall look to the system of the Duke of Portland as the model by which I shall regulate the general line of my conduct. The chief object of my attempts will be, to purify, as far as circumstances and prudence will permit, the principles of government, in the hopes of thereby restoring to it that tone and spirit which so happily prevailed formerly, and so much to the dignity as well as the benefit of the country; but it would be vain to hope that any exertions of a Lord-Lieutenant could ever effect so desirable an end, unless he meets with the concurrence of the most eminent and distinguished characters in this very arduous attempt. It is, sir, to you and your friends, the Ponsonbys, that I look for assistance in bringing it to bear. Without the hope, which I am vain enough to entertain of that assistance, I should decline engaging in so hopeless a task as the government of Ireland. It is that assistance which I am therefore now soliciting. I know well the honourable, the useful, the important support government has received at your hands on many critical occasions, and at different periods; but except during the momentary administration of the Duke of Portland, I believe it has so happened *that you never have approached the Castle in confidence, and avowed friendship: great obstacles have always stood in the way.* Should these obstacles be removed, I trust that distance will no longer be necessary; and that I may entertain a hope of seeing you form with the Castle, that sort of intimate, direct, and avowed connexion, as will render support doubly efficacious.

I have the honour to be, with the highest esteem, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

Wentworth Fitzwilliam.

P. S. It may seem a little inconsistent, and that this letter is written rather prematurely, when I beg not to be quoted as having announced myself in the character of a

Lord-lieutenant elect; my name not having yet been mentioned to the King on account of his absence at Weymouth.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. MR. BERWICK.

London, Sept. 12th, 1794.

I WRITE to you from London to tell you no news, except that I got your letter in Ireland a day or two before I left it, and had not time to answer it until this moment, viz. a few hours after I have gotten out of the chaise.

You will assure Mr. Henry* from me, how glad I should have been to have seen him, and that I do not despair, because I fancy I shall leave England before he leaves Henry Street, and shall be at Tinnehinch before he will be at Straffen.

Your friend Doyle I have heard is much better, but looks ill. I shall see him to-day.

Had I been less polite, I should have waited for a day to tell you what is going on; but good-nature should yield to good-breeding, which had you in my conscience, though not in my eye, and now sends you a letter clear of anything like intelligence, for it is no news to assure you that I am yours very sincerely,

H. C.

On Mr. Grattan's arrival in London, he called on the Duke of Portland, who said to him, "I am glad to see you; I have taken office, *and I have done so because I know there is an entire change of system.*" Shortly after this, the party dined at the Duke's—Mr. Pitt, the Grenvilles, Lord Fitzwilliam, the Ponsonbys, Sir John Parnell, Mr. Grattan, Lord Portarlington, and some others. George Ponsonby had not been acquainted with Mr. Pitt, the latter sat by Sir John Parnell, talked a good deal to him, and seemed to like him much; but the Ponsonbys and the Grenvilles were cold and distant, and looked as if they would cut each other's throats. Lord Portarling-

* This individual was connected by marriage with the family of the Duke of Leinster; in manners the most polished and agreeable, in stature he was small; and a ludicrous error occurred as to him and Mr. Grattan in 1798, which will be noticed hereafter.

ton was taken ill, (the day being very hot,) and was carried out of the room. The party, however, did not seem to mind the circumstance in the least, or evince any anxiety about him; intent as they were on their several projects, the company were cold and indifferent — there was no cordiality; they appeared to know they could not trust each other, and broke up without much satisfaction on either side. Sir John Parnell seemed to have made a better impression on Pitt, than Pitt did upon him, as appears from the following incident. When the former was talking of the Irish Catholics, and rejoicing at their union with the Protestants, Pitt said, "Very true, Sir; BUT THE QUESTION IS, WHOSE WILL THEY BE?"—thus casting, as Parnell thought, an unjust imputation upon that body. He made another awkward remark, when he observed to Mr. Grattan, "*What does Ireland want? What would she have more?*"— The fact was, Pitt did not like Ireland, he could not manage her as easily as he wished, or, as Mr. Grattan expressed it, "*She was not handy enough for him.*" It was necessary, however, that Mr. Grattan should have a communication with him on the subject of Ireland, and he received the following notes on the occasion:—

MR. PITT TO MR. GRATTAN.

MR. PITT presents his compliments to Mr. Grattan; he wishes much, if it is not disagreeable to Mr. Grattan, to have an opportunity of conversing with him confidentially on the subject of an arrangement in Ireland, and for that purpose would take the liberty of requesting to see him, either at four to-day, or any time to-morrow morning most convenient to Mr. Grattan.

Downing Street, Wednesday, Oct. 15th, 1794.

MR. PITT TO MR. GRATTAN.

MR. PITT presents his compliments to Mr. Grattan, having requested that the conversation which Mr. Grattan

has had the goodness to allow him might be considered as confidential; he does not think himself at liberty to refer to it, without being sure that he has Mr. Grattan's permission; but he rather imagines he will have no objection to Mr. Pitt's doing so as far as may be necessary, in any explanation on the subject with the Duke of Portland, and any other of his colleagues.

Mr. Pitt's anxiety to avoid any doubt on this point will be his apology for giving Mr. Grattan that additional trouble.

Downing Street,
Wednesday, Oct. 15th, 1794, ¾ past 5, P. M.

This interview was an important one, discloses the secret history of the transaction, and shews how the minister deceived both the Catholics and the country. It cannot be said that he deceived Mr. Grattan, for the latter declined office, being determined not to put himself in his power; besides, he was well aware of the character of the individual with whom he was to confer. His old friend, Denis Daly,* on whose opinion he always had so much relied, and who had been in office under Pitt, told Mr. Grattan long before what he thought of him. "He was a good minister for England, but a bad minister for Ireland," were his words. Gerard Hamilton, who was a close observer of mankind, and who knew men very well, said, "*I would not trust Pitt, for depend upon it he'll cheat you;* he may be a good theoretical minister, but he is a bad practical one"—a very just remark; doubtless the youth, the family, and the name of Pitt had given him the reputation and the air of liberality; but when he came to deal with the House of Commons, he found it easier to manage them by arts and by money than by any way else. Mr. Sergeant Adair was also in London at the time, a friend of Mr. Pitt, and an acquaintance of Mr. Forbes and Mr. Grattan; he told

* He was Muster-Master-General.

the latter, "*All that is to be done should be set down in writing, for if you have any dealings with Pitt he'll cheat you; I never would act with him except I had pen, ink, and paper.*" At the meeting between Mr. Grattan and Mr. Pitt, the latter was very plain and very civil in his manner. Mr. Grattan stated to him what his party desired, and mentioned the measures that he thought Ireland required: the essential one was the Catholic question. Mr. Pitt, upon this, remarked, "*Ireland has already got much.*" Mr. Grattan did not tell him how she had got it.* They did not enter into the details of the Catholic question; but Mr. Grattan put it down upon paper; in reply to which Mr. Pitt used these words: "*Not to bring it forward as a Government measure, but if Government were pressed,* TO YIELD IT." This unquestionably was a concession of the Catholic question; for Mr. Pitt knew well that the question would be pressed; it was certain to be brought on. All parties—Protestant, Presbyterian, and Catholic—had called for it, and at their meetings, passed resolutions in its support. Nothing could keep it back; it was not an opposition question, nor did it stand in need of any instigation; and of this Mr. Pitt was well aware. This was the arrangement he made with Mr. Grattan, and as the latter often mentioned, "*such were the identical expressions.*" There was, however, another subject introduced by Mr. Pitt, namely, that of the Lord-Lieutenant; and Mr. Pitt observed, "The question now is, how shall Lord Westmoreland be provided for?" This did not appear to Mr. Grattan a valid objection, still less an impediment to measures in favour of Ireland; he left this affair to be settled by Mr. Pitt: all that he was concerned about, was the arrangement for the people.

* By her armed Volunteers.

After this, Mr. Grattan went to his party; they pressed him to form one of the Government, and were dissatisfied at his declining office. They did not wish that he should be one of them, and not incur any responsibility; nor did they like to keep in Sir John Parnell: so that he did not succeed without some difficulty; for as he observed, "I had to defend Sir John Parnell as well as myself,—one from going out of office, and the other from coming in. I thought it better, however, to patch up the business, and not be the instrument of breaking off; *for I had got the* GREAT MEASURE, *and the next thing was to get* THE MEN." The party accordingly acquiesced; and though they were very desirous of turning out the person who had opposed them, they yielded to Mr. Grattan's interference, and Sir John Parnell was allowed to remain in office. The following letters confirm the foregoing statement. The difficulty which Mr. Grattan alludes to, in his letter to Mr. M'Can, had been got over. Mr. Pitt had satisfied himself as to his own objection respecting Lord Westmoreland; Lord Fitzwilliam was satisfied that he had full powers as to the Catholic question, and in a conference afterwards with Edmund Burke on the subject, he said to him, "*I would not have taken office under you unless I knew that* THAT *was to be done*"—namely, the concession of the Catholic question. On the whole of this transaction let posterity decide, and let them pronounce their verdict on the case of Ireland and the conduct of Mr. Pitt.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

27*th October*, 1794.

MY DEAR M'CAN;—Had I any thing to write, I should have written. At present, all I can say is, that nothing is determined at present. Mr. Pitt don't agree to those extensive powers which we were taught to believe

the Duke of Portland had. However, I should not be surprised if it were settled well at last, and that Lord Fitzwilliam went over; nor yet would the contrary surprise me. This week will decide.

Desire them *not* to write from Tinnehinch, for *I* hope to leave this on Monday, or Tuesday next.

Yours most sincerely,

H. GRATTAN.

In reference to the "extensive powers" alluded to in this letter, Mr. Grattan wrote to Mr. Pitt, saying, that he conceived there was a mistake as to the immediate appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam, and to his powers in Ireland; and he wished extremely that the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt would have a conference upon the subject; the result of which was the removal of the difficulty, as appears from the subjoined letter.

LORD FITZWILLIAM TO MR. GRATTAN.

30*th October*, 1794.

DEAR GRATTAN;—When the Duke of Portland reported to the Cabinet this morning my acceptance of the Lieutenancy of Ireland (the result of your decision) it met with a hearty approbation. *I trust to the sincerity of it, and feel no diffidence of receiving an honourable support from this side the water.*

I write this from Lord Milton's, who is taking care of a gouty toe, to be the better able to undertake the duties of a Lord-lieutenant's secretary, which, complying with my request, he is to undertake; but being confined to his drawing-room, is no impediment to a slight introduction to business. If you think of calling upon him to ask after his health, perhaps it might be not unadvisable to get Sir John Parnell to do as much. Conversation might turn upon subjects that necessarily they must hereafter frequently converse together upon. Believe me, with sincere esteem and regard, truly yours,

Monday night. WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

However, after this arrangement had been made with Lord Fitzwilliam, Mr. Pitt threw obstacles in the way;—first, as regarded Lord Westmoreland and his friends; then he added

another—namely, delay. Various excuses were made for not swearing in Lord Fitzwilliam:—the King at one moment was said to be ill; at another moment was at Weymouth, and could not come to London. The appointment not taking place, and Mr. Grattan being informed that some objectionable measures were in progress, he went to the Duke of Portland, and informed him of what he had heard. The Duke expressed his surprise, and stated that he knew nothing of such appointments. While they were in conference an official box was brought in, and on opening it the list of the appointments (*the jobs**) that Mr. Grattan complained of were there found. The Duke said to Mr. Grattan, "*They are scandalous, but you may depend on it not one of those papers will ever see His Majesty.*" However, in a little time after, every one of the appointments appeared in the Gazette. Such was the honesty of Mr. Pitt's ministry!—such the faith observed towards Ireland!!

This circumstance must naturally have opened Mr. Grattan's eyes, and he began to fear that things were not likely to terminate so well as was expected; and this it was that induced him to act afterwards with more promptitude and decision. In fact, the Duke of Portland was a weak man; he certainly had done some good things in Ireland, though with what exact view many men doubted;† but he was really afraid of Mr. Pitt, and had not courage to put a direct question to him;—thus the party were deceived, and Mr. Pitt's artful and insincere policy completely succeeded.

* One of these appointments was that of Mr. Cooke, whose conduct in 1798 and 1800, showed Mr. Grattan's foresight in making the objection.

† See the letters of Lord Shelburne to the Duke of Portland in reference to the question of a Union, Appendix to Vol. I.

At length His Majesty came to London on the 10th of December, to swear in Lord Fitzwilliam. Mr. Grattan attended his levee, and was well received. The King was very civil, and spoke to him so much, as to attract particular attention; and the day after, Lord Loughborough waited upon him and complimented him on the reception he met with. Mr. Burke, who had gone to Court to thank His Majesty for his pension, called also on Mr. Grattan, and congratulated him on the prospect of success. He was in mourning, looked very ill, and was very melancholy—talked a good deal about the loss of his son—said "that the pension would be of very little use to him—that it came too late to contribute to his comfort, as he had lost the person for whom alone he would have desired it—he was sorry he had accepted it, but he was so pressed by the King that he could not refuse it." Both these individuals conceived that the question as to the Catholics was concluded, and, in fact, carried.

CHAPTER VII.

Lord Fitzwilliam arrives in Ireland, January, 1795—Joy of the people—Addresses from Protestants and Catholics—His reply—Speech to the Irish Parliament—Mr. Grattan moves the address to the King—Edmund Burke's remark—Mr. Grattan proposes a grant of 200,000*l.* to raise 40,000 seamen—Sir Lawrence Parsons as to the principles and intentions of the Whig party—Reduction in the national expenses—Mr. Grattan obtains leave to bring in the Catholic bill—Lord Fitzwilliam is recalled—Sir Lawrence Parsons moves a short money bill—Alarming state of the country in consequence of Lord Fitzwilliam's recall—Vote of approbation of his conduct by the House of Commons—Private history of the intrigues of the Beresford party with Mr. Pitt—Proceedings as to Messrs. Beresford, Cooke, Wolfe, and Toler—Letters of Lord Fitzwilliam and the Duke of Portland, respecting Mr. Beresford—Treacherous conduct of Mr. Pitt—Fatal consequences—Mr. Grattan's opinion thereon—Letters of Mr. Forbes, Lord Loughborough, and Mr. Burke—Proceedings in the British Parliament—Protest of Lords Ponsonby and Fitzwilliam—Letters of Lord Fitzwilliam and Lord Milton.

On the 4th of January, 1795, Lord Fitzwilliam arrived in Ireland: he was received with joy by all classes of people, and addresses of congratulation were presented to him from the principal towns and counties throughout Ireland. The Protestant dissenters welcomed him as the friend of civil and religious liberty—the inheritor of the virtues of his illustrious relation, the late Marquis of Rockingham; the Roman Catholics hailed him as the harbinger of peace, to whom was reserved the glory of completing the benevolent wishes of the father of his people for the union of all his subjects, and they prayed for the abolition of all religious distinctions. In his answers to these addresses, Lord Fitzwilliam stated the principle of his government, and what party was to uphold them,—so as to remove all doubts as to his inten-

tions and instructions, and to satisfy the minds of the people.

"From the submissive and peaceable conduct of the Catholics of Ireland, under the pressure of restrictions, which considerations of temporary policy, and circumstances peculiar to some unhappy periods of civil dissension, had imposed, there is every reason, at this day, to rely on them for firm fidelity and cordial allegiance. The language you now hold confirms this reasonable expectation; while the gratitude you express to our beloved Sovereign for his paternal care, to which you so loyally and justly ascribe the first openings of your emancipation, and the sentiments you entertain of *the magnanimity of a liberal and enlightened Parliament, that rose superior to the prejudices of ages, and displayed a cordial disposition to cease to discriminate between his Majesty's subjects,* when every motive for that discrimination had ceased, must be highly satisfactory to every description of your fellow subjects. Such declarations, while they bear so visible a stamp of sincerity and truth, as your address discovers, must afford a pleasing earnest of the happy consequences that necessarily follow from mutual confidence and reciprocal trust among the inhabitants of the same empire, and manifest the wisdom of the measure that had led the way to that unity of sentiment and interest on which, as on their only solid basis, the strength and prosperity of nations rest.

"In the faithful discharge of my duty to his Majesty, it shall be my study *to call to my councils those who are distinguished and known for their wisdom, their integrity, and their talents, and who possess the confidence of his Majesty's people.* Assisted by their advice, and availing myself of their support, I trust that I shall be enabled to promote the first wishes of his Majesty's heart, *by securing the full and cordial union of all his subjects, as the surest means of securing their happiness.*"

These expressions were clear and intelligible, and could not have been mistaken by Mr. Pitt; he was apprized of them long before the Irish Parliament assembled; he knew their import and tendency, and he never objected to them in the slightest degree, or wrote to Lord Fitzwilliam on the subject. In fact, they were in strict accord-

ance with the arrangement made by the respective parties in London (Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Portland, Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Grattan); but a more distinct intimation of their nature was given in about three weeks afterwards, when on the 22d of January the Irish Parliament assembled. The Viceroy on this occasion delivered a remarkable speech from the throne: he departed from the annual and hacknied commendation of those exclusive establishments (The Protestant Charter schools), and recommended to Parliament the consideration of the state of education in the kingdom. He declared—

"That some parts admitted of improvement, others required new arrangements; that the advantages hitherto had been but partial, and as circumstances had made other considerations highly necessary, he hoped that Parliament would order every thing in the manner best *adapted to the occasions of the several orders of men who composed his Majesty's subjects in Ireland.*"

Hopes were entertained that the education of the great mass of the people would be favourably attended to by Parliament; and as nothing had been done since the plan proposed by Mr. Orde, in the time of the Duke of Rutland (1787), that a system would at length be adopted which would embrace all classes of Irish. This important measure, however, which had been mentioned by Mr. Burke in a preceding letter, fell very short of the wants of the people: it was not carried into effect as desired, and only led to the establishment of the Catholic College of Maynooth, for the purpose of preserving the clergy from the contagion of French principles. In alluding to the war with France, the speech reproached the false and spurious liberty of that country, as an ignominious servitude, extinguishing all good arts, and presenting nothing but impiety, crime, disorder, and

ferocious manners. In calling on the Irish Parliament to assist in that war, the Viceroy said,—

"You must be duly sensible in such a crisis as the present, which rarely occurs in the course of human affairs, of the advantage of thus *endeavouring to profit by the united strength and zeal of every description of his subjects. I have to assure you of his Majesty's most cheerful concurrence in every measure which the wisdom and comprehensive patriotism shall point out for this salutary purpose.* On my part you shall find me, from principle and from inclination, thoroughly disposed *to concur with his Majesty's paternal wishes, and with the wise measures of his Parliament.* On a cordial affection of the whole of Ireland, and on a conduct suitable to that sentiment, I wish to found my own personal estimation and my reputation in the execution of the great trust committed by the most beneficent of sovereigns to my care."

Mr. Grattan moved the address in answer to the speech, and following up the idea expressed by the Viceroy, observed—

"To be attached to Great Britain is of no avail, unless you are also attached to one another; external energy must arise from internal union, and, without that, your attachment to England, and your allegiance to the king, though extremely honourable, would be entirely useless.

"His Majesty, therefore, in the second part of his speech, recommends national harmony; he bids perpetual peace to all your animosities; he touches with the sceptre those troubled waters which have long shattered the weary bark of your country, under her various and false pilots for ages of insane persecution and impious theology. *It is a continuation of that pious and profound recommendation which enlightened the speech of* 1793, *when the olive descended from the throne,* on the experiment of that advice, and he congratulated the liberality of Parliament: he now spreads his parental wing over all his children, discerning with parental affection and a father's eye, in the variety of their features, the fidelity of their resemblance. He, therefore, over-rules the jingling jargon which disgraces your understanding, and that poverty of pride which is vain of mutual degradation, and creates a real poverty of condition; and he calls forth all the public and productive energies of all his people, neither resting his throne on the mo-

nopoly of allegiance, no more than he rested your fortunes on the monopoly of commerce."

Mr. Duquery proposed an amendment condemning the war and the conduct of Mr. Pitt, in refusing to treat with the French government. This was rejected, and the address was agreed to.

Mr. Grattan then presented the petition of the Roman Catholics of Dublin, praying for the removal of the restraints and penalties to which they were subject on account of their religion.

These proceedings of the Irish Government and their chief supporter were not only known to Mr. Pitt and his party, but approved of by them; and on the account reaching England, Mr. Burke, on the 29th of January, in a letter to Mr. William Smith, then a member of the Irish Parliament, afterwards Baron of the Exchequer, says, "*I congratulate you on the auspicious opening of your session.* Surely Great Britain and Ireland ought to join in wreathing a never-fading garland for the head of Grattan."*

Accordingly, on the 3rd of February, in full confidence that faith would be observed towards Ireland, and that the British minister would not recede from his agreement, Mr. Grattan moved that 200,000*l.* be granted for the purpose of raising men for His Majesty's fleet; and stated that his friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir John Parnell) would move in committee forty-one thousand men for the home defence, and as the revenue was now equal to the peace establishment, the taxes would be inconsiderable. The motion was agreed to without a division. On the 9th, Sir Lawrence Parsons enquired whether the principles professed by the members of the Government when out of power would be the ruling principles at present. Mr. Jephson said:—

* Burke's Works, vol. ix.

He rejoiced to see Lord Fitzwilliam in administration, and the persons by whom he was assisted; they were *the only persons who projected between the two countries a connection which would be honourable, just, or permanent. These were the men who, in* 1782, *secured the emancipation of Ireland, and under every discouragement since, had adhered to their professions.* Since 1782, the tried friends of Ireland had been excluded from power; the patronage of the Crown most wantonly employed in the house, not to support the empire, but to oppose the people. Necessitous and intolerant individuals had been advanced to direct the public affairs *on the principle of "divide et impera," and hence it was that Ireland had been a scene of distress and embarrassment.* Through rancour of persecution, and excess of insult, men have been alienated from the throne; but this contagion had not spread far, and the errors of the preceding, would, he was confident, be remedied by the wisdom of the present administration.

Mr. Duquery declared he thought it right, before he voted the money of the people, that he should know what the people were to get.

Mr. Grattan declared that the same principles which he and his friends professed when in opposition, continued to govern their conduct now;—that they would try to give them effect;—and accordingly they reduced the Pension list 44,000*l.*, and the Concordatum list 22,000*l.*;—they proposed a reduction in the collection of the revenue—an encouragement of the breweries—a restraint on the use of spirituous liquors, and a substitution of a wholesome beverage for the people.

Meantime the Roman Catholics were not inactive:—from all quarters of the nation—from the chief cities, towns, and counties, petitions were presented to the House of Commons praying for the repeal of all restrictive laws; and none of moment were presented from the Protestants against them;* and on the 12th of February, three weeks after the meeting of Parliament, Mr. Grattan obtained leave to bring in a bill for their relief—three members only dissenting.

Government next proceeded with the new taxes, and the reformation of the police; and Mr. Grat-

* One was presented from the Corporation of Dublin.

tan obtained leave to bring in a bill for the latter purpose. The reform of the representation, and the repeal of the Convention Bill, were among other measures eagerly looked for by the people; but when the redress of grievances was expected, and about to be demanded, the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam began to be rumoured, and on the 2nd of March, when the report from the Committee of Supply was brought up, Sir Lawrence Parsons proposed that the words in the Money Bill, "the 25th of March, 1796," be expunged, and the words, "the 25th of May, 1795," be inserted.

He stated that the grant of supplies and the redress of grievances should go hand-in-hand. The only security the country had, was a short Money Bill; it had been tried in 1779; it had been tried in 1789; and, in both instances, had been of utility. The people had been led to expect great measures; their hopes had been raised, and now were about to be blasted. *If the Cabinet of Great Britain had held out an assent to the Catholic question, and had afterwards retracted, it was an insult to the nation,* which the House should resent. There had been no meetings; no petitions of the Protestants against the claims of the Catholics. It would thence be inferred that their sentiments were not adverse to the emancipation; this was held out as the leading measure of administration; the Responsibility Bill was another; the Reform Bill was another. In consideration of these measures, additional taxes had been voted to the amount of 250,000*l.*; but now it appeared that the country had been duped—that nothing was to be done for the people. *If the British minister persisted in such infatuation, discontent would be at its height, the army must be increased, and every man must have dragoons in his house.*

The motion was rejected by 146 to 24. Mr. Conolly then proposed three resolutions:—

"That Lord Fitzwilliam, by his public conduct since his arrival in Ireland, deserved the thanks of the House and the confidence of the people.*

* At the instance of the Chancellor and the Bishop of Ossory, the Lords altered a similar motion of the Duke of Leinster, to "*The confidence and thanks of this House.*"

"That to prorogue Parliament before the grievances which the people complained of were redressed, would be highly inexpedient.

"That these resolutions be laid before His Majesty."

Mr. Conolly withdrew the two last, at the instance of the Government party; the first passed unanimously, and the Speaker, attended by the entire House, waited upon the Lord-lieutenant with their vote, who replied with expressions of satisfaction at finding he was entitled to the confidence of the people; but on the 24th of March he was recalled from the government of Ireland.

Never in the history of any nation can there be found such duplicity—such treachery, and such baseness as was practised towards the people of Ireland. The proceedings of this eventful crisis appear in Lord Fitzwilliam's letters; and, with those here published, they develope the intrigues and unworthy arts that were but too successfully resorted to. Before Lord Fitzwilliam's departure from London, he had settled the outline of his administration. The question of relieving the Catholics from every remaining disqualification had been discussed by the Duke of Portland and the British cabinet, with Mr. Pitt at their head, and they were strongly impressed with a conviction that the work ought to be completed. Lord Fitzwilliam expressly says, in his letters* to Lord Carlisle, what he had in private said to Mr. Burke, "*that had he found it otherwise, he would never have undertaken the Government;*" the only thing he consented to do was not to bring forward the question on his part; but that if the Catholics were determined to bring it before Parliament, he would give it a handsome support.

On his arrival in Ireland he found that an immediate consideration of the question must take

* They appeared under the title, "*Letters to a Venerated Nobleman.*"

place; and on the 8th of January he wrote to the Secretary of State (the Duke of Portland), informing him that the question would be brought on—that the principal persons in Ireland were of opinion, that if the measure could not be postponed, it ought not to be resisted, *and that concession was necessary for the public tranquillity.*

Lord Fitzwilliam then applied himself not only to collect information from the Catholic committee, but from the noblemen and principal Catholic gentlemen termed Seceders, of whom mention has been made in the second chapter. They were unanimous in opinion as to this object, and stated their determination never to lose sight of it. Accordingly, on the 15th of January, he wrote to the Duke of Portland, declaring—

"That he should not do his duty if he did not distinctly state it as his opinion, that not to grant cheerfully on the part of Government all the Catholics wished for, would not only be exceedingly impolitic, but, perhaps, dangerous; that in doing this, no time was to be lost; that the business would be presently at hand, and that the first step he took would be of infinite importance: that if he received no very peremptory instructions to the contrary, he should acquiesce — he meant, as well in the time as in the mode of proceeding, and the extent of the demands; for as a measure considered generally, I would conceive no necessity of waiting for any new instructions, or how to decide."

This took place about a fortnight after Lord Fitzwilliam's arrival, and before the meeting of the Irish Parliament; so that Mr. Pitt knew that the question was in agitation, and that petitions had been determined upon by the Catholics; he knew the extent of their demands — that the question could not be kept back, and that if the Lord-lieutenant was not informed to the contrary, he would act on the spirit of the arrangement which he had made in London.

This was the time for the ministers to come forward and object to the question if they really entertained the opinion which they subsequently professed,—namely, "*that it led to consequences which could not be contemplated without horror and dismay.*" But not a word of the kind escaped them. Lord Fitzwilliam received many letters from the Duke of Portland, and no hint even was thrown out against the Catholic question; and in the letter of the Duke of Portland on the 13th of January, after the receipt of Lord Fitzwilliam's letter on the 8th, no objection whatever was made to the Catholic question; and in it the Duke signified the King's assent to Mr. Wolfe's peerage, which was part of the arrangement for his retirement from the office of Attorney-general, to make way for Mr. George Ponsonby. On the 2nd of February Lord Fitzwilliam wrote again to the Duke of Portland, and the Duke was again silent; nor did he mention a word of disapprobation at the projected dismissal of Mr. Beresford, which was mentioned in Lord Fitzwilliam's letter of the month previous; and *it was only on the 9th of February* that Mr. Pitt wrote to Lord Fitzwilliam, expostulating on the dismissal of Mr. Beresford, and on the negotiations respecting Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Toler; although *the King had on the 13th of January, actually consented to Mr. Wolfe's elevation to the peerage,* which was part of the arrangement, and in that letter Mr. Pitt said nothing about the Catholic question.

The individuals who complained loudest, and intrigued most, were Mr. Beresford and Mr. Cooke. In Lord Carlisle's time they were clerks, but in Lord Fitzwilliam's they were ministers. The tone and style of Mr. Cooke rendered him insupportable to Lord Fitzwilliam; and the influence which he and Mr. Beresford had at the

Castle, furnished just grounds of complaint. With respect to the Attorney-general (Wolfe), and the Solicitor-general (Toler), the former was to have a peerage, and a reversion to him and his son of 2,300*l.* a-year, with an assurance that he would fill the first vacancy of the chief seat on the bench. Mr. Toler was also to be provided for. The chief point, however, regarded Mr. Beresford, whose influence was so considerable in the country. With respect to him, Lord Fitzwilliam was to allow him his full income, and not to interfere with the emoluments of the rest of his family; and Mr. Cooke was to have had a retiring salary of 1,200*l.* a-year. The objections to these individuals had been made in person by Lord Fitzwilliam to Mr. Pitt, when Mr. Grattan was in London. Mr. Pitt did not oppose his removal, or say a single word in favour of Mr. Beresford; and Lord Fitzwilliam, after his arrival, reminded Mr. Pitt, by letter, of this circumstance. But it was not until the Irish Parliament had submitted to heavy burthens, not only by providing for the security of the kingdom by great military establishments, but likewise by assisting the empire at large, in the moment of its greatest distress, by aids great and unparalleled, beyond all example; it was not till Lord Fitzwilliam's popularity had induced the House of Commons, on the faith of popular questions, to grant the largest supply ever demanded, and a larger army than had ever before been voted in Ireland; it was not till he had laid a foundation for increasing the established force of the country, and procured a vote of 200,000*l.* for the general defence of the empire, and 20,000 men for the navy, and a supply to the amount of 1,800,000*l.* that the British cabinet proceeded to notice and reply to Lord Fitzwilliam's letters.

Then, for the first time, the dismissal of Mr. Cooke and Mr. Beresford was complained of, and made a charge against Lord Fitzwilliam; then, and not till then, commenced the accusations against him as to the Catholic question, and his imputed design to overturn the constitution in church and state. But a reference to the proceedings on this subject, will show the futility of this charge, and that it was a mere pretext. Let it be recollected, that this question, though opposed in 1793 by Lord Westmoreland and his friends, had been supported by Mr. Hobart (the Irish Secretary), and the British Cabinet; that Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas (Lord Melville), had given it their support; that they had communicated their intentions to the Catholic agents in London, and their expressions (well remembered, and often quoted) were, that "*they would not risk a rebellion in Ireland on such a question*,"* yet the very man who had actually agreed to it, in conference with Mr. Grattan and Lord Fitzwilliam, and to the former of whom he had used these very remarkable words,—"*I have taken office, and I have done so because I knew there was to be an entire change of system*,"—this Duke of Portland, in his letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, says that "to defer the Catholic question was not only *a thing to be desired for the present, but the means of doing a greater service to the British empire than it has been capable of receiving since the revolution, or at least since the Union*."

On the receipt of this letter, Lord Fitzwilliam immediately acted with a spirit and resolution worthy of him. He wrote to Mr. Pitt, defended the dismissal of Mr. Beresford, as necessary to the efficacy of his government, and left the minis-

* The Duke of Wellington said something like this in 1829, when the Catholic bill was passed.

ter to chose between him and Mr. Beresford. He wrote the same night to the Duke of Portland, stating his surprise at their resisting a question that had been long since agreed upon, and this at the expiration of such an interval of time; namely, from the 8th of January, when he first wrote about the Catholic question, to the 8th of February, when it was first objected to by the English ministers. *He stated the danger of hesitation or resistance, and he refused to be the person to raise a flame in the country, that nothing short of arms could keep down;* and left him to determine whether, if he was not to be supported, he ought not to be removed.

On the 16th of February the Duke of Portland wrote *a private letter* to Lord Fitzwilliam, saying that

"Although it would be attended with great advantages to defer the consideration of the Catholic question till peace was established, yet that it *was* GOING TOO FAR *to infer from any thing he said, that Lord Fitzwilliam was desired to undertake the task of deferring it till that period;* and that if the Cabinet were to accede, what they desired was, to be justified in that accession by a free investigation of facts, circumstances, and opinions; and as it was still within Lord Fitzwilliam's reach to have the bill modified before it was introduced, and before the plan was known to the Catholics, he wished to have this plan and the heads of the bill transmitted for consideration."

Now it happened that, at the time the Duke wrote that letter, Mr. Pitt was in possession of all the facts; for Mr. Grattan, who managed the bill, had communicated the heads of it to the Lord-lieutenant, and every thing which regarded the constitution, the ecclesiastical establishments, and the settlement of property—all these had been communicated, *together with the Primate's opinion upon them to the Duke of Portland, before Mr. Grattan got leave to bring in the bill.** Yet,

* By this bill, Roman Catholics were eligible to the office of Lord High-Chancellor—from which the act of 1829 excludes them.

after this, the Duke of Portland assisted at the Cabinet meeting of the 19th of March, where it was unanimously determined to recall Lord Fitzwilliam "*as a measure necessary for the preservation of the empire!*"

The truth was, that the dismissal of the Beresford party was the real cause of Lord Fitzwilliam's removal.* That "*clique,*" as Mr. Burke called them, whose influence in the Government of Ireland had been paramount and excessive, afraid of losing power, proceeded to London,—misrepresented the state of Ireland,—exerted every effort against Lord Fitzwilliam,—reported to the King that the concession of the Catholic question would injure the Protestant religion,—worked successfully upon his fears, and infused into his breast the worst prejudices against his Irish subjects. In fact, religion had nothing to say to the question,—it was a mere pretence. *The cry that the church was in danger, was an after-thought,* and was found a convenient and apt means to serve the purposes of a party, and restore a fallen faction. The intrigues of the Beresfords succeeded. *Mr. Pitt abandoned his principles, his promises, and his professions. He first deceived, then recalled Lord Fitzwilliam, and committed the basest breach of public faith that had occurred since the days of Lord Strafford, and not very dissimilar from it. By so doing he gave the country over to the United Irishmen, and prepared the way for the Insurrection and the Union. His measures were fatal for British character, and the Irish people henceforth lost all confidence in the British Government.*

Such is the history of Mr. Pitt's conduct to-

* Mr. Gifford, in his life of Pitt, says Lord Fitzwilliam immediately removed Lord Fitzgibbon from the office of Lord Chancellor.—He is wholly mistaken; no removal took place, and Mr. Gifford here again shows his want of information, and his mis-statements as to Irish affairs.

wards Ireland, — one that Mr. Grattan never ceased to deplore, and respecting which he never entertained a second opinion. The letters here subjoined throw additional light on these transactions. The one from Mr. Forbes contains a passage singularly prophetic. Lord Loughborough's statement discloses the case as to Mr. Beresford; and those from Mr. Burke, and from (that noble and honourable-minded man) Lord Fitzwilliam, will be read with interest and emotion. Pity that such generous sentiments should have been disregarded!—Pity that a brave and virtuous people should have been so maltreated!

MR. FORBES TO MR. SERGEANT ADAIR.

Dublin, Feb. 25, 1795.

Dear Adair,—This will be delivered to you by Mr. M'Can, a *very confidential* agent of *our party* for many years, and a particular friend of Grattan's and mine. He can afford you *much information;* he goes over to obtain, on the recommendation of the Lord-lieutenant, the situation of the printer of the Gazette.* You will oblige us much by urging Baldwin and King, the under secretaries, to dispatch through their office the king's letter for M'Can; have the goodness to give Mr. M'Can an order for admission to the House of Commons at times. As you conjectured, the administration of our friend is rather embarrassing. *I fear that Pitt does not act fair by him, and that our friends in your cabinet do not support their friends here with vigour. Certain persons* are not accustomed to business, which causes much hesitation and diffidence in almost every subject. What is to be done on the subject of the war? Wonderful feebleness in Great Britain! We expect the French here next summer, yet are not prepared. Rest assured that a descent of a few thousand Frenchmen in this kingdom will prove a most disastrous

* He did not get the place; but some months after was appointed to the laborious office of tide-waiter at the Custom-house, and in 1806, the place was given, under the Duke of Bedford's administration, to a foe. The policy of rewarding enemies has ever proved fatal to the Whig party.

event. Remember me to Mr. Adair, Lady Wilson, and your son, and believe me, dear Adair, yours very sincerely,

J. Forbes.

P.S.—I open this letter to mention to you the necessity of the English Government acceding to the proposition from the Irish cabinet relative to the complete emancipation of the Irish Catholics. It is reported that Pitt intends to overturn the Irish cabinet by rejecting Catholic claims. Should he pursue that line, England will be involved in inextricable confusion, AND IT WILL END IN THE TOTAL ALIENATION OF IRELAND!!!

LORD LOUGHBOROUGH TO MR. GRATTAN.

28*th Feb.* 1795.

My Dear Sir,—I received your letter only yesterday, which seems later than, by the date of the 17th, it might have reached me. No press of business could prevent me taking the earliest opportunity of answering it, both from the motive of the strongest regard towards you, and the importance of the matter. From the time that I was fortunate enough, with your very powerful assistance, to bring our friends to meet together *on the very clear explanation, settled between us, and Mr. Burke*, I never attended any of the conversations on the detail of business, but I had the satisfaction to think, from the appearance of confidence re-established, which I had frequent opportunities of remarking, *that nothing was left unexplained and unsettled at the time of the Lord-lieutenant's departure.*

I have since been obliged to hear, with great regret, many things which make me doubt whether the particular discussion had been as ample as I hoped. The first account I had of the particular subject of your letter, was from a friend of Mr. Beresford. The manner in which he represented that business to have passed was this:—That Mr. B., without any previous communication to himself, or any of his friends, received an abrupt message to inform him that he was to be removed, because the power of himself and his family was so great as to be formidable to the Lord-lieutenant; that he should be allowed, however, to retain a pension to the amount of his salary, and his friends to keep their places; that this message was followed by a letter of dismission from Lord Milton, without the least reference to any arrangement, or concert with the minister on whom his office immediately depended, and from whom he felt himself entitled to claim protection.

The same information added that Mr. B. was not in the least disposed to struggle for the continuance of his office; and had he been treated with a little more consideration, would not have given, nor was he now inclined to give, any obstruction to a fair arrangement. The latter part of this representation I have reason to believe perfectly true; the first part, of which I have only traced the outline, without the colouring by which it was heightened, staggers my faith, because it is very unlike the habit of Lord Fitzwilliam's mind, who could not wish to insult a man whose power he only meant to lessen, and so very inconsistent with the tenor of that note of our conversation to which I have alluded. To remove, without a previous concert of the terms and mode of the removal, a person in high office, would not have expressed that attention to Mr. Pitt's situation, which is so plainly acknowledged; and supposing him merely the first commissioner of the treasury, without the influence usually attached to that office, to have dismissed an officer in his department, by a letter from the Lord-lieutenant's secretary, would not have been agreeable to that respect which ministers owe to each other.

The Administration here (in which there has not discovered itself the least appearance of Schism) is not, I am persuaded, in any part of it disposed to support discontent in Ireland, or lend an ear to complaints of supposed grievances; but they must support the general order of Government, and I think they will be unanimous in that object; wishing at the same time ardently every fair accommodation, and deprecating every hasty measure, they do not expect that your friends should (because they do not think they ought) *support any family Government* that could be created or restored in Ireland. It is necessary, however, for the mutual credit of both Administrations (especially under the pressure of such difficulties as affect all equally) to proceed "*suaviter in modo*," and with great attention to the character of each for steady, just, and temperate measures.

Depend upon it, that no personal considerations can continue to divide us, if they are not urged on by an hasty and overbearing spirit. If any candid person had come over from your side, he might have settled all this matter, and I hope still may. We know and highly prize the value of your support, which shewed itself so greatly in the last session; we also feel the high duty that the pub-

lic danger imposes on all men, to act on large principles, disregarding the play of private interest or of prejudice.

But you must allow us a fair scope, both for deliberation and action, otherwise we should not deserve your esteem, nor with it that friendship which I hope and trust will ever remain most entire between you and, my dear sir,

Yours most faithfully, LOUGHBOROUGH.

EDMUND BURKE TO MR. GRATTAN.

Tuesday, March 3rd, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,—Though I have heard much *of* you, until this day, I have heard nothing at all *from* you since you left us at Beaconsfield, after the consolatory day which you and Mrs. Grattan were pleased to bestow upon us, in our house of mourning. For my part, I did not choose to interrupt you in the course of the glorious, and ever memorable services you were rendering to the Crown, to your country, to the British empire, and to the contracted remains of the Christian world. I had at length, however, I know not how properly, resolved to break silence. In truth, I feel as much joy as my poor broken heart is capable of receiving, *from the manner in which the Irish session has opened.* I could not help contrasting it with the appearances here. Opposition to the Crown, with you, was not only weakened, but extinguished. The degenerate, or the treacherous cry of peace with France, which was the subject of so many repeated, and powerfully supported motions here, with you was not heard in either House of Parliament. The petitions so much intrigued with us, and in many places with success, did not dare to crawl out from any hole or corner of Ireland. Whilst so many in England were rushing into the arms of France, Ireland resolved to live and die with Great Britain. To crown all, *more troops were raised, and greater sums were voted to the King's service than before was ever known;* it was in the hope of this I wished, and, as you know, laboured, according to my poor measure, that such a union in all parts of administration might take place, as should put it in your power to do these services; *and really thought everything was settled.* The effect far exceeded my expectations. I am sure that the peace cry was stopped here, by its being stopped in Ireland.

Guess at my shame and humiliation, when I find myself the innocent means of putting you in danger of losing the whole of the importance by which you were

enabled to do these things, and by which you would be enabled to continue them, until the very idea of Jacobinism was eradicated from every part of this empire. I beg your pardon a thousand times, if I have been the means of the *triumph of the intrigues of Ireland over your manly virtues.* I am told that they already cry, victory! They say that no evil can happen from the disgrace of the Lord-lieutenant, and from your being set aside; that by what you have done, you have disarmed your opposition; that they have you fast; and that they have nothing now but to enter quietly into their old possessions, and to enjoy the fruits of your labours. If I have been the means of taunting and insulting you in this manner, and of discouraging all men of honourable characters and independent situations from acting hereafter the part that you have acted, I take a shame to myself, not lessened by the goodness of my intentions; for I ought not to have meddled. The malignant part of *the opposition, who predicted this very thing*, and whose joy upon it knows no bounds, judged better by the event than I did. This day, I hear from all parts, is to them a real day of jubilee. I am lost and confounded; I have humbly submitted my sentiments; I have nothing, but to take refuge in oblivion, until I take refuge in the grave. As to you, you are a man, a man of honour and of wisdom; you will know what to do. I am most incapable of offering my advice, in a case like this. Some things occur to me, but having so often failed already, it is fit that I should make no further attempts. Certainly there is something not short of madness abroad. It is much fitter for me to suppose myself to be under its influence, than to conceive it affects so many reputed to be wise, and who certainly ought to be so.

I am now to tell you what is objected to you, as separated from the matters of arrangement, which are more justly put—as, of course, they ought to be—to the account of Lord Fitzwilliam. It is said, that in your situation (which, though independent of, is not unconnected with Government, in whose Parliamentary business you substantially take the lead) you ought to have communicated your intentions, with regard to the Catholics, to the administration here,* that they might take the

* This report, so industriously circulated, was quite unfounded, for Mr. Grattan had communicated the heads of the bill and all matters

matter seriously into their consideration, and, in a measure of such importance, to consider to what extent any thing to be done in their favour ought to go. They complain that this was not done on your part. It is further said, that supposing you had not formed any distinct scheme upon the subject, and waited to confer further with the parties concerned in Ireland, you ought to have deferred the motion for leave to bring in the bill, until the substance of the proposition was forwarded hither, and the sense of the King's servants taken, whether it would be right to give it the countenance of the Court. *I do not find, that as to the substance of the very large concession towards that body, that the Ministers are come to any positive resolution against it;* but they say, that it is fair that it should be laid before them: and those who, though not Ministers, are zealous in their support, say that you have treated them as ill as possible, in not having, through the Lord-lieutenant, made this communication. It is complained, that even at this hour, they have not a copy of the intended bill—that by this means they cannot exercise their judgment, so as to obtain any sort of credit with the Catholics towards the Government, to which it is proposed to attach them by benefits, by any concession that can be made; but that the hesitation, which must ever belong to men when they deliberate, will be given, as a proof of an ill disposition towards that body, which does not exist. This is what is said. What observations I have made upon these matters of objection, is of no weight with you. I could only speak from rational conjecture, and what would be my probable motives for acting as you have done, in the situation in which you are.

Thus far I wrote last night. Your letter did not come to my house until the post had gone away. Since I received it, I have seen four of the Cabinet Ministers, and have laid the matter before them, in the fullest manner that the time would permit. I dare not give you any clear hope of an amicable settlement; but I do not give it up as impracticable. The Duke of Portland has been ill for some days; the complaint is an erysipelas; but I plainly perceive that this very business sinks his heart, and is preying on his vitals. I declined to give an advice, but I have no scruple, after much consideration in a

relating to it to Lord Fitzwilliam, before he moved for leave to bring it in, and these were forwarded to the minister in England.

sleepless night, to say that Lord Fitzwilliam, neither in honour, nor in prudence, public or private, can at this moment think of quitting Ireland. I am clear about it; and by next post, that is, to-morrow, please God, I shall state my reasons somewhat more fully; *but move heaven and earth against a sudden step. Let no part of the mischief be attributed to that. I say this without any reference at all to anger, fear, or hope, but imperious duty and inflexible principle demand it.* Adieu for to-day—and God send us other times. Yours ever, most devotedly,

EDMUND BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO MR. GRATTAN.

March 5th, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot get the letter* I proposed to send with this copied time enough for the post, which waits at the door. My mind is in a state of too much distress to permit me to write to you very much at large; it has not, however, hindered me from submitting my thoughts and my observations on your letter, to such of the people in power here as I have been able to see. With one of the principal of them I spent two hours yesterday, and two hours the day before. I was admitted with facility, and heard with great temper, and I may say with great indulgence, but with what effect I know not. I have reason to apprehend that the general state of things is not yet materially altered; they are in a most unpleasant way, and must remain so, *whilst a certain* FAMILY CABAL† *are in the sole possession of the ear of Government, as long as it is believed that they, and they alone, are faithfully attached to the interests of the Crown, and the only proper representatives of English Government;* and that all others are selfish and violent persons, either seeking their own gratifications at the expense of the public peace, or hunting, at any hazard, after wild popularity. As long as it is believed that things would have gone on perfectly well in the old hands, and that an attempt to widen the bottom of Government by displacing those who were best disposed, and most able to save it, for the purpose of procuring unanimity, by taking in the most considerable of those who were discontented with that Government, was the cause of all the divisions and distractions which

* This letter could not be procured.

† The Beresford and Clare faction.

agitate Ireland, and all the evils which may hereafter arise from them. These ideas, together with an opinion which I am afraid is never to be removed from the mind of Mr. Pitt, that Lord Fitzwilliam has removed these people from a desire in their persons of *maltreating him*, are industriously circulated. God knows how deeply these things may sink into their hearts; but *no means are omitted by the* CLIQUE *to inculcate them by day and by night, and not only to state them to Ministers, but to spread them in every circle in this town.* It is greatly to be lamented for the public good (for Lord Fitzwilliam is far out of the reach of obloquy, and so are you), that no confidential and well-instructed person was sent hither *to counteract, in their very beginning, the representations of* THIS DETESTABLE BUT TOO WELL CONCERTED CABAL. I am vexed too, that when Windham, who (whether right or wrong in some of the matter of dispute I care not) did everything that man could do to heal the breach, had written to Lord Fitzwilliam, his answer had been so very cold and repulsive. I know personally, that if there is an irreparable breach, it is no fault of his; he brought me the first news of it, and consulted me on the means of a remedy. There never was a more exalted mind than that of Lord Fitzwilliam,—exalted are irritable minds. Prostrate me as a suppliant at his feet, and beseech him to abate his just feelings, in which I most completely sympathise with him. If he be not gone, implore him to stay. Time itself is a mighty healer where passions are concerned—*tempus inane peto, requiem.*

I send you a copy of a letter which I had back from Mr. Elliot to-day, which I wrote to him hastily, under the impression of my first feelings: it is the brief infinitely enlarged, from whence, together with your letter, I spoke when I came to town. I had a share in the coalition (in the disposition to it, not in the arrangement). I had a share (with you, and under you) in keeping it together, when it was likely to break to pieces, undone as I am in mind and body. *Please God, whilst one link hangs to another, I will not be untrue to you. In my judgment, the monarchy is as much obliged to you at least, as to any subject the King has, and as long as I think the monarchy the stable support of our lives, our liberties, and our properties, so long shall I honour and love you;* and will directly and straightforward obey you in any task you shall impose upon me. I

know not how it was, but your letter was a long time on its road hither—I suppose the post-office of Dublin is not very faithful; if it be, it has belied the old opinion entertained of it; but for my own part, I am little afraid of it, except in suppressing the letters. Have you got one from me, written since I came to London?

I have no doubt the Catholic business will be done. I have already told you, that, so far as I could discover, *the substance of the thing was not much disrelished by Government;* but the great ground of certainty is, that every rational creature MUST be convinced that it *must* be done. What the *Irish clique* propose, is some credit here, for opposing a measure which might seem to endanger the Church, and then to have the credit with the nation at large of granting it; and from both these contradictory operations, to derive security to their own *jobbish power:* this is the first and the last in the piece. *The Catholic question is a mere pretence.* Pray get an account of all the debates in which the clique resisted your motions, then stole them from you, and brought them out in a new shape, all their speeches in both houses on the Catholic business in the two sessions; and pray get the full report and all the evidence about the Charter schools, and send it to me. Remember me to Mr. Hardy; I will answer his two last letters to-morrow. I have received all of them.

Ever, ever yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

The proceedings, as regarded Lord Fitzwilliam, may be terminated here. On his arrival in London, he brought the subject of his recall before the House of Lords, complaining of the treatment he had received, and demanding an enquiry. The minister declined the offer; on which the Duke of Norfolk moved on the 8th of May for all copies of correspondence between the Government and the late Lord-lieutenant. The question was debated with much zeal by Lords Fitzwilliam,* Moira,

* In the letters of Lord Fitzwilliam to Lord Carlisle, the words "*imputed malversations,*" were attributed to Mr. Beresford. The latter sent Mr. Montgomery to Lord Fitzwilliam to demand an explanation. Lord Fitzwilliam declined to give any. Accordingly a message was delivered. Lord Townsend was to have been second to Mr. Beresford;

Leeds, and Guildford, and opposed by Lords Mansfield, Coventry, Carnarvon, Westmoreland, Townsend, and Grenville, who asserted that it was the inherent prerogative of the Crown to remove all public officers, and that his Majesty was not called on to assign any reasons. Lord Westmoreland declared that the concession of the Catholic question was contrary to the spirit of the Constitution and the Revolution, and that the coronation oath was a bar that could not be got over. He admitted that he had taken the part of Mr. Beresford, and exerted himself against Lord Fitzwilliam to the utmost of his power. Lord Fitzwilliam asserted unequivocally, that he was fully authorised to complete the work of 1793, namely, Catholic emancipation. He challenged contradiction on this point, and added, emphatically, "*for having connected myself with Mr. Grattan, I am dismissed; for it was obviously on that account chiefly that I incurred the hostility of the English minister!!*" The motion was rejected by 100 to 25. A spirited protest was entered on the journals by Lords Ponsonby and Fitzwilliam; it details the entire proceeding of the Government. The sixth and fifteenth reasons assigned are so remarkable, that they are worthy of being introduced.

DISSENTIENT: 6th. Because it appeared in the course of the debate, without any attempt to contradict it, that the Earl aforesaid (Fitzwilliam), did actively and effectually promote the service of the Crown, and the public interest in Ireland, by encouraging through all fitting means, and discouraging by none, the zeal and affection to his Majesty of his Parliament of Ireland; *by obtaining without delay, and with great unanimity, a vote of more than forty thousand men,* by which the internal force of that king-

but his house was so closely watched, that he was afraid to stir. Lord Moira was second to Lord Fitzwilliam. The parties met near Kensington, when a peace officer entered the ground and stopped all further proceedings.

dom was more than doubled; *and by obtaining also a vote of two hundred thousand pounds for the better manning the navy of Great Britain*—the first vote of the kind in the present war, and double, *to the sole example of the supply of the same kind, voted in the Irish Parliament in the year* 1782, *as an acknowledgment of the vast and important concessions in legislation, commerce, and judicature, then made by the Parliament of Great Britain; both these supplies for the service of Great Britain were moved by Mr. Grattan;* CONFIDENCE IN WHOM HAS BEEN IMPUTED AS BLAME TO EARL FITZWILLIAM; though in the debate, nothing was alleged to show that this distinguished person, called to his confidence and councils, had ever, during Lord Fitzwilliam's Government, made any other use of the estimation in which he is held in his country, than to perform this, and other similar services to his Majesty's Government, and to reconcile the minds of his fellow-subjects of that kingdom to bear the burdens brought on these services with cheerfulness, and to co-operate with alacrity and unanimity in every means of giving them their full effect.

DISSENTIENT: 15th. Because it is offered in proof, that the late Lord-lieutenant was diligent in the search, and prompt in the communication to Ministers of every information on the subject. That he soon found, *that all hope of putting off the question was impracticable;*—that he had reason to think the present time, for carrying *the principle of the acts of* 1792 *and* 1793 *to their full object, to be, of all others, most favourable;*—that he found the relief to be ardently desired by the Catholics; *to be asked for by very many Protestants, and to be cheerfully acquiesced in by almost all;*—that this circumstance removed the difficulties, on which the postponing the question could alone be desired;—that he found the delays had created much suspicion and uneasiness amongst the Catholic petitioners, who were numerous almost beyond all example;—that he found a bill on those petitions would infallibly and speedily be brought into Parliament, and that many members were desirous to introduce it; and, if this were the case, *the measure might come into hands with which neither he nor the King's ministers had any connection*, which would leave with Government only the disagreeable part of altering or of modifying, if any alteration or modification had been thought necessary by the British Government, *depriving*

His Majesty thereby of the whole grace and effect of what was done: that in this unpleasant situation *he sent for Mr. Grattan, and desired him, as a person in his confidence, and who would act on the occasion according to what he and the Ministers, in their prudence, might suggest;*—that Mr. Grattan did consent, and did, at his desire, move for leave to bring in a bill for the further relief of the Roman Catholics;—that the motion for leave was received with little discussion, and without any division;—that no bill on the subject was, in fact, brought in, and that Ministry were informed, that none would be brought in without their knowledge; nor until of late, and after Lord Fitzwilliam's departure, was such a thing attempted;—*that the then Lord-lieutenant communicated largely all his ideas on the subject;*—that whilst the proposed bill was not yetintroduced into the House of Commons, and whilst he was obeying their instructions, with regard to informations and opinions, he was suddenly removed with the strongest marks of displeasure and disgrace;—that in this state of things, no sufficient reason appears to exist, in this measure, any more than in the business of arrangements, for the unusual and alarming step of disgracing a Lord-lieutenant in the middle of a session of Parliament, in which the business of His Majesty and of the whole empire (as far as that kingdom would operate in it) was carried on with unusual unanimity and success, and with a very great concurrence without doors of all orders and descriptions of men. It is a step for which, on the debate, nothing was said to make it appear justifiable, and to render an inquiry concerning it unnecessary.

PONSONBY.
FITZWILLIAM.

In the House of Commons, a motion similar to that in the Lords was made by Mr. Jekyll, Mr. Fox, and Mr. (afterwards Lord) Grey spoke highly in favour of Lord Fitzwilliam, and complained of the ill treatment practised towards Ireland. Mr. Pitt declined any explanation, pleaded official secrecy, and the right of the King to remove or dismiss whom he pleased. No sufficient arguments were advanced against the Irish, nothing to justify or even palliate his con-

duct; and his sole protection against a people he had thus injured and insulted, was his accustomed majority—188 to 49 being against the motion.

LORD FITZWILLIAM TO MR. GRATTAN.

London, 25th April, 1795.

DEAR GRATTAN,—The illness of Milton at Billing has prevented me writing to you: whilst I remained there, I could have nothing worth troubling you with. The scene now begins to open here. I went on Wednesday to the levee. Very little was said to me; only a few questions about my son's health; however, I thought the manner gracious, as the King, upon seeing me, passed by some people to come directly to me. After the levee was over, I demanded my audience in the closet; I opened the subject by stating myself, as a person in a state of crimination by the recall which his ministers had recommended to his Majesty to send for my return; that this could not have been recommended without implying misconduct; it was peculiarly, therefore, my duty to give to his Majesty the best account I was able of the circumstances of my administration, that he might recollect the perilous and difficult moment in which I received the government. A fleet of the enemy, of thirty-six sail of the line, came hovering upon our coast, and no strength on the part of his Majesty's fleet to protect us;—we were open to invasion;—that an invasion would have occurred at that period, in an unfortunate moment, from the unfortunate circumstance of the great mass of the lower orders being disaffected notoriously, and supposed ready to flock to the standard of an invader;—that I had judged it necessary, without loss of time, to make such arrangements as I conceived would tend to give satisfaction to the public:—*that this was to be done, not only by calling to my councils persons in which the public reposed real confidence, but to make it manifest at the same time, that the whole system of government, which was so odious, was no longer to be pursued, by the removal of particular persons;*—that his Majesty's service had incontrovertibly profited by the arrangements;—that the proof that it had, was to be found, first, in the grants and measures of Parliament, and next in the universal concurrence which those acts of his Parliament met with amongst every description of his subjects;—*that the Catholic Question being a measure upon*

which the opinions of his Cabinet were known to me, as upon its principle there rested of discretion nothing but the time. That his Majesty was now enabled to form his own judgment upon the justness of my decision, by the universal approbation with which the emancipation of the Catholics was received on the part of his Protestant subjects. That if it might be supposed that my partiality for the measure might give it a sanction, his Protestant subjects would not venture to approach the Houses of Parliament, or the Castle, with petitions against it, during the supposed authority of my administration; there had existed a subsequent period, when that authority was publicly set at naught; and, therefore, no such reason could be said to exist then; but their silence in the last period, was as complete, as in the first, save only a petition to his Majesty from the *corrupt* corporation of Dublin,—a proof of the power and authority of my opponents, since the active and effective men of that body work only for their daily pay. They must have been paid for their petition; the enemy, therefore, had been active, but without success, in any other instance whatever. But the approbation of the Protestants rested not upon the presumption of a negative; it was proved by the affirmative sentiments expressed in a variety of their addresses to me, sometimes by most unequivocal allusions, oftentimes in most direct terms. I stated proudly the claim I conceived I had to his approbation and favour, by providing in the manner I had done for the exigencies of his service, and still more by having reconciled to his Government the affections of his people, which I feared had been alienated under former administrations. That I trusted such would be the opinion of his Majesty when the circumstances of the case were more fully laid before him, and when he was enabled by his own insight into its merits, to form his own judgment upon it.

I desired his permission to leave in his hands a memorial which I had drawn up in a succinct manner for his consideration. If it was his desire, or if I had his permission, I would hereafter enter more fully upon the subject, and into a greater detail upon the different parts of my administration; in the meanwhile I threw myself upon his justice for permitting me to vindicate a character that had been publicly attacked, in as public a manner as the attack had been made, and in such manner as should appear to me most suitable to my purpose. He was very gracious

upon the occasion, and said, "*Undoubtedly.*"—On my declining an offer of a seat in the cabinet amongst persons who had treated me so injuriously and so unjustly, and who ought not to have called me to a situation of such importance to his Majesty's interest and welfare, if they really thought me guilty of such crimes as merited the punishment they had inflicted; he expressed, (and in a manner that appeared much in earnest,) his most sincere conviction, that in no instance had I acted improperly "*in my own opinion.*" He had stopped me once before to make a protestation to the same effect; he appeared to me much struck with the levity *with which I treated the supposed danger from the admission of Roman Catholics into Parliament;* the folly of pretending to give credit to a danger to the Church Establishment from half a dozen Roman Catholic gentlemen having seats in Parliament; and the responsibility of those clergy who pretended to talk of conversions to Catholicism. *I told him it would better become them to defend the sanctity and purity of our religion by their efforts, than to slander it by their pretended apprehensions:* that danger to the establishment in church or state, would never arise from Catholics and Members of Parliament acting in their true character and by true lawful means, but from atheists and anarchists.

Some sentiments of this nature which I threw out seemed to be new to him, and to impress him considerably. Upon the whole his attention was gracious, but he gave no opinion whatever, only *as to my intentions.* So far for the business of the closet.

I send by the Bishop of Ossory the memorial I presented, but I beg to have it kept perfectly secret; it would be highly indecorous to have it known, or its substance talked about. The fact that I have presented one, I have no objection to being known; on the contrary, let it be known to all the world my anxiety to defend our common cause in every place where it ought to be defended.

I entered yesterday upon our defence in the House of Lords. Lord Milton did the same in the House of Commons.—Not having been to the King till Wednesday, I could take no step before; for on Thursday, though I attended Hastings' trial, I was too unwell to hold my head up for a moment. I yesterday called upon Ministers to name their day to make good their charges. Their

act was of itself an indictment,—it was their duty to proceed with their evidence. They declined, upon the general ground that the removal of a King's servant was not a ground of public discussion; nor was it of necessity that there should be blame anywhere. I enforced my claim, and was backed by Lord Moira, and the Duke of Norfolk, the latter of whom said, it was not for the dignity of the House that such an event should pass without an investigation into its causes; as neither of the parties would come forward and name a day, and state a mode of proceeding: though himself unprepared to suggest what would be the most expedient for the occasion, still he would move a summons of the House for Thursday next. I must say it stands precisely upon the footing on which I should wish it to stand. Being brought forward by a third person, I trust I shall find myself in the situation I wish to be in;—that neutral men will force Ministers to speak out, or take to themselves the disgrace of shrinking from the question. I think it within the reach of possibility that I may enter largely upon the subject on that day. I am convinced they will hang off as long as they can. Lord Grenville looked more sour and angry than it is to be conceived; the same remark was made of Pitt, yesterday, for the first time. *I saw the Duke of Portland in the House; we passed with the coldest bow. Lord Grenville does not deign to lay his eyes upon me*, and mine do not seek him, or any of them.

When I came out of the closet, Windham, and Lord Spencer were in the antichamber: the former came up to me, with an open countenance. I received him with decent openness. He is the only one that deserves the least degree of candour. My own opinion is, that not one person pretended to make an effort but him; all was done before he knew anything of it. As for Lord Spencer, *shame was upon his countenance, and I did nothing to wipe it off—it was on its proper place.* This is the state of things here. I need not say to you, that I expect to be supported by opposition; the ground is too good for them to suffer it to slip by. I may be roughly handled by them, for aught I know; but still they will support the cause. I verily believe public opinion goes much with us, and I shall be much disappointed if the discussion does not work in our favour. I wish I had your abilities to fight it through the day; I would make them sore before

the evening. One thing I have to add, that *among the common connexions of the Duke of Portland and myself, I hardly know a second sentiment.* The Duke of Devonshire, and Lord John, and Lord George* may keep, and I suppose will keep away on the discussion; but I have the satisfaction of feeling confident that if they will permit themselves to think there is a right and a wrong, they do not think me in the wrong. This is a private consolation, though I cannot reflect upon it without feeling how great an alloy there is in the consolation. I shall be anxious to hear, not only of your proceedings in the House, but much likewise of the general temper and inclinations of the public.

I find you introduced your Bill on Wednesday last, and have moved for a Committee on the state of the nation for Monday. I shall be wonderfully anxious for the debate on the latter day. I understand the Bill is positively to be thrown out, to give the lie to my representations.

This must be a general letter to the Ponsonbys, as well as to yourself. Pray communicate it to them, and tell them the truth. I have not time to write, nor new matter worth their reading. Believe me, both yours and theirs affectionately, WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

LORD MILTON TO MR. GRATTAN.

MY DEAR SIR,—Having just left Lord Fitzwilliam oppressed with one of his head-aches, and consequently unable to write to you, I have hurried home, though but just in time, to give you some account of the debate of last night in the Lords. The motion of the Duke of Norfolk was for extracts of such letters as related to the recall of the late Lord-Lieutenant, which was immediately objected to by Lord Coventry, and afterwards by Lord Mansfield, on the general principle of interfering with the King's prerogative of dismissing such of his servants as he thought proper. On the other side, the particular circumstances of the case were considered by Lord Guildford, and particularly by Lord Moira, who, with great force and eloquence, entered into the merits of the measures, and stated his complete approbation of them, and introduced a compliment and panegyric upon you, which your modesty alone could have prevented you from hearing, with the same satisfaction and pleasure with

* Cavendish.

which it was heard by all your friends. The giant and barefaced corruption which had for a course of years pervaded the Government of Ireland, he strongly animadverted upon, and the mention of Beresford's name drew up Lord Townshend to give his testimony in favour of that gentleman, which he did, shortly stating him as a man of honour, integrity, and so forth; but, previous to his short speech, Lord Westmoreland went into a defence of his own administration, and what he meant as an attack upon Lord Fitzwilliam, the whole delivered in so awkward, incoherent, and disgusting a style, and tone of voice, as to make considerable impression in the house utterly to his advantage. Lord Fitzwilliam replied to him, with great force, great dignity, and great effect, marking very distinctly the impropriety of Lord Westmoreland's embarrassing the succeeding Government previous to his departure, and continuing the same conduct, by his own avowal and confession, upon his arrival in this country. The popularity which, on various occasions, in and out of Parliament, had so uniformly manifested itself towards the King's Government under his administration, he ascribed to the notoriety of his having placed his confidence in you, and the Ponsonbys, and in your connexions, and in his having withdrawn it from it from those who had enjoyed the confidence of the administration to which he succeeded, and on your popularity, on the use you had at all times made of that popularity, on your views, on your character, and on your abilities, he expatiated, with an ease and eloquence that seemed to flow from the nature of the subject and the justice of the cause. The length of Lord Grenville's speech, which was merely upon the impropriety of inquiring into a dismissal, —the futility of Lord Buckingham's, which was merely a eulogy upon Beresford, and Hamilton,—or Lord Spencer's, which was expressive only of his satisfaction from the conduct of Mr. Pitt towards himself, I need not enter into. But Lord Lauderdale's was in a strain that I cannot pass over; the comparison he drew of the speeches of the two Lord-Lieutenants was masterly in the highest degree, and his animadversions upon Lord Westmoreland's most severe; who, when he was declaiming against Lord Fitzwilliam's profusion in making arrangements, claimed the reversion to Wolfe as his own act, and who, when finding fault with his disclosing private communications, had the

folly and impudence himself to state conversations that had passed between himself and Mr. Pitt (whom he named without any circumlocution) on the subject of the Catholic measure, which *Pitt told him was not to pass, and on the subject of the removals, which Pitt told him were not to take place!!!!* Excuse me to the Ponsonbys for not writing to them, by shewing them this letter. I wish I may do you the same justice on Tuesday, that Lord Fitzwilliam did you yesterday. We hear of Pelham's declaration with astonishment. Yours ever,

MILTON.

P.S. How the Duke of Portland should have escaped the debate will appear as extraordinary to you as it does to me. Accusations of general duplicity were thrown out, but nothing particular against him. He said a few words at the close of the debate.

CHAPTER VIII.

Conduct of the Irish on the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, March, 1795—Addresses to Mr. Grattan, and his answers—Error of the Opposition in joining the Duke of Portland—Arrival of Lord Camden—Mr. Grattan's remarks as to British cabinet and connexion—Sensation in the House by his spirited conduct—Motion on the state of the nation—rejected—Separation between Protestant and Catholic—Rejection of Catholic question—Remarks of Mr. Grattan—Result of change of government—Defenders and Orangemen—Persecution of Catholics—Lord Gosford and the Armagh resolutions—Spread of Defenderism and United Irish—Illegal conduct of Lord Carhampton—Parliament meets, January, 1796—Indemnity and Insurrection Bills—Speech of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—State of peasantry—Motion of Curran and Jephson—Whig Club report on the poor of Ireland—Invasion apprehended—Parliament called in October 1796—Mr. Grattan's amendment—Messrs. Fletcher and Curran—Habeas Corpus Act suspended—Mr. Grattan's proposition in favour of the Catholics—His declaration as to the Government measures—Yeomanry called out.

The Irish people did not remain silent or passive spectators of the duplicity practised upon them by Mr. Pitt. Oppressed by penal laws, they had long submitted to unmerited injury. Now they were called on to submit to unwonted insult. They justly felt, that though the former might be atoned for, yet the latter admitted of no compensation; and if they tolerated such indignity without a murmur, they would be lowered in their own esteem, and in the opinion of every lover of justice and freedom. Accordingly, Protestants and Catholics alike assembled, and addressed Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Grattan, deprecating the departure of the Viceroy, and the loss of the public measures which he and Mr. Grattan had supported. Petitions were presented to the King, complaining of the conduct of his minister. The counties of Tipperary, Galway, Wexford, the

Queen's County, the Catholics of Dublin, the Protestants of Londonderry, some of the minor Corporations of Dublin, the Students of the University, addressed Mr. Grattan on the occasion, and expressed, in spirited and patriotic terms, their sense of the ill-treatment which the country had received. Mr. Grattan's replies merit attention, as well for the principles they contain, as for the sketch of Irish affairs which they delineate. No history of these times would be complete without them.

ADDRESS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS OF DUBLIN.

To the Right Hon. Henry Grattan.

Sir,—We are instructed by the Catholics of Dublin to offer you their humble tribute of thanks and gratitude, as well for the eminent services which you have rendered to this kingdom on various occasions, as for your able and generous exertions in their cause. It is not easy to do justice to a man whose name is connected with the most brilliant events of his time, and who has already obtained the highest of all titles,—*the deliverer of his country:* but though it is impossible to add to your fame by any terms we can employ, it must be grateful to you to learn that you have a place, not only in the admiration, but in the affections of your countrymen.

To be thus loved and admired is surely an amiable distinction. It may not, perhaps, be sufficient to preserve or purchase station and power at court, but to a well-formed mind it is a source of purer satisfaction, than the favour and protection even of monarchs or their ministers. Few men have had it in their power to do so much for their native land as you have done for Ireland. When you first entered into public life, garrison habits, and *provincial prejudices, were opposed to Irish interests and feelings, and, what was still more discouraging, the different descriptions of people in this country, far from being ready to meet in a common point for their mutual advantage, were kept asunder by perverse and unintelligible antipathies of a religious nature.* Into this chaos of contradiction you infused your spirit, and brought order in some measure out of confusion. The first effort of your eloquence was to rouse the Irish parlia-

ment to assert its own independence; and, notwithstanding the habits of subjection which particular causes had induced, you were successful. At present you are engaged in a pursuit equally honourable to your head, and still more to your heart. As mover of the Catholic Bill, you are endeavouring to inculcate the necessity of moderation and justice, where you had before inspired courage: and urging men who triumphed over foreign supremacy, to an act of much greater dignity and difficulty,—a sacrifice of the prejudices of their youth and education.

In this work, so full of genius and public spirit, and *which goes to the creation of a people, as your former exertions went to the forming of a constitution*, you have already made considerable progress; and when you and your illustrious friends were called to the councils of a virtuous viceroy, we looked with confidence to the accomplishment of your patriotic intentions.

Some enemy, however, to the king and to the people, has interposed his malignant and wicked suggestions, and endeavoured to throw obstacles in the way of our total emancipation. But we are far from giving way to sentiments of despondency and alarm. We feel the justice of our pretensions, and we are persuaded that *what is fittest will prevail over the arts of perfidy and falsehood.*

What gives us the most sensible satisfaction, is the general union of sentiment that pervades all ranks and descriptions of Irishmen on the present occasion. Never did Ireland speak with a voice so unanimous. *Protestants and Catholics are at this moment united, and seem to have no other contest but who shall resent most the outrage that has been offered to Irish pride* in the intended removal of a patriotic viceroy from the Government, and you and your friends from the councils of this kingdom.

(Signed) By order, &c. &c.

MR. GRATTAN'S ANSWER.

GENTLEMEN;—*In supporting you, I support the Protestants. We have but one interest and one honour, and whoever gives privileges to you, gives vigour to all.* The Protestant already begins to perceive it. A late attack has rallied the scattered spirits of the country from the folly of religious schism, to the recollection of national honour; *and a nation's feuds are lost in a nation's resentment.* Your emancipation will pass; rely on it, your emancipation

must pass : it may be death to one Viceroy, it will be the peace-offering of another; and the laurel may be torn from the dead brow of one governor to be craftily converted into the olive for his successor.

Let me advise you by no means to postpone the consideration of your fortunes till after the war; rather let Britain receive the benefit of your zeal during the exigency which demands it, and you yourselves, while you are fighting to preserve the blessing of a constitution, have really and *bonâ fide* those blessings.

My wish is that you should be free now; there is no other policy which is not low and little; *let us at once instantly embrace, and greatly emancipate.**

On this principle I mean to introduce your bill, with your permission, immediately after the recess.

You are pleased to speak of the confidence and power with which for a moment I was supposed to have been possessed.

When his Majesty's ministers were pleased to resort to our support, they took us with the incumbrance of our reputation, and with all our debts and mortgages which we owed to our country.

To have accepted a share of confidence and council without a view to private advantage, will not meet, I hope, with the disapprobation of my country; but to have accepted that share without any view of public advantage, would have been refinement on the folly of ambition; measures, therefore, public measures and arrangements, and that which is now disputed, were stipulated by us, were

* These words were animadverted on many years afterwards in the Imperial Parliament by Sir Robert Peel (then Secretary). He had persevered to the last in opposing this principle of Mr. Grattan. Ultimately, he was forced to submit, and give, in 1829, a reluctant, and hard-earned victory to the Catholics. But this tardy and thrifty concession deprived the measure of its healing effects, and impaired its greatness. It came late, — it came ungraciously, — it disfranchised 200,000 Irish electors, and even Mr. O'Connell, who had been returned for Clare, was excluded by its enactment.

The spirited conduct of the people of Clare was beyond all praise, and should never be forgotten by those who value freedom. In spite of threats, promises, and intimidation, they persevered in returning a Catholic before the repeal of the exclusive statutes—(he could be elected, though he could not sit or vote without incurring a heavy penalty). Yet, as if for this virtuous conduct, the forty shilling voters were disfranchised. Such are generally the rewards that Ireland has received for her patriotism !

promised in one quarter, and with assurances they were resisted in another.

In the service of Government, under his Excellency's administration, we directed our attention to two great objects,—the kingdom and the empire. We obtained certain beneficial laws, the discovery and reformation of certain abuses, and were in progress to reform more; we obtained a great force, and a great supply, with the consent and confidence of the people. *These were not the measures of courtiers, they were the measures of ministers.*

His Excellency *Lord Fitzwilliam may boast that he offered to the empire, the affections of millions, a better aid to war than his enemies can furnish, who have forfeited those affections, and put themselves in their place.*

So decidedly have the measures of Ireland served the empire, that those who were concerned in them might appeal from the cabals of the British Cabinet to the sense of the British nation. I know no cause for the displeasure of the English Cabinet; but if the services done to Ireland are crimes which cannot be atoned for by the empire, I must lament the gloomy prospects of both kingdoms, and receive a discharge from the service of Government, as the only honor an English minister can confer on an Irish subject. I conceive the continuance of Lord Fitzwilliam as necessary for the prosperity of this kingdom. *His firm integrity is formed to correct; his mild manners to reconcile, and his private example to discountenance a progress of vulgar and rapid pollution;* if he is to retire, I condole with my country. For myself, the pangs on that occasion I should feel, on rendering up my small portion of ministerial breath, would be little, *were it not for the gloomy prospects afforded by those dreadful guardians which are likely to succeed. I tremble at the return to power of your old task-masters:* that combination which galled the country with its tyranny, insulted her by its manners, exhausted her by its rapacity, and slandered her by its malice. Should such a combination, once inflamed, as it must be now by the favour of the British court, and by the reprobation of the Irish people, return to power, *I have no hesitation to say that they will extinguish Ireland,* or Ireland must remove them. It is not your case only, but that of the nation. I find the country already committed in the struggle; I beg to be committed along with her, and to abide the issues of her fortunes.

I should have expected that there had been a wisdom and faith in some quarter of another country, that would have prevented such catastrophe; but I know it is no proof of that wisdom to take the taxes, to continue the abuses, damp the zeal, and dash away the affection of so important a member of the empire as the people of Ireland; and when this country came forward, cordial and confident, with the offering of her treasure and blood, and resolute to stand or fall with the British nation,—it is, I say, no proof of wisdom nor generosity to select that moment to plant a dagger in her heart. But whatsoever shall be the event, I will adhere to her interests to the last moment of my life.

HENRY GRATTAN.

ADDRESS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS OF THE COUNTY OF TIPPERARY, 20TH MARCH, 1795.

To the Right Hon. Henry Grattan.

SIR,—If services to Ireland are to be deemed crimes,—if a life devoted to the successful assertion of the dignity and independence of his native country, excites the suspicion and distrust of those *who seem desirous to convert an imperial kingdom into a dependent province;* the patriot who enjoys the confidence, and has earned the gratitude of millions, will find in the consciousness of his own integrity the best reward of his virtues, and the firmest support of his measures, in the unanimous concurrence and approbation of every class of the people.

The baleful breach of narrow and bigoted politicians may check, but cannot destroy the blossoms of our just expectations whilst you live; and we think *we cannot despair that freedom—constitutional freedom, will extend, and must be imparted to all Irishmen.*

You, Sir, have our confidence; and whilst we have formed the most sanguine expectations from your unshaken virtue, and most brilliant talents, we feel at the same time an honest pride by our attachment to the constitution, and by our long-tried loyalty, to have entitled ourselves to your approbation and support.

(Signed) by order,

THOMAS LANIGAN, Chairman.
GEORGE GREENE, Secretary.

MR. GRATTAN'S ANSWER.

GENTLEMEN,—I thank you for the confidence you are

pleased to repose in me, and for the choice of the time in which you are pleased to express it.

To have incurred the displeasure of a powerful quarter, is to me no new misfortune. If I wanted consolation, I have it in my own conviction, in your confidence, and in the approbation of my country.

The justice of your cause; your attachment to His Majesty; your desire to preserve and cultivate a connexion with Great Britain; the firm but dutiful tone with which you apply for privileges, and now the interposition of your Protestant brethren in your favour, must ultimately secure your success.

The tranquillity observed at this present interesting moment, in places, too, where so many rumours to the contrary were so confidently circulated, is an argument that the Catholics are too much in earnest to be tumultuary, *and that they seek, through the peace of the country, the privileges of the constitution.*

The most adverse to your cause, (save the few who are always adverse to the people,) will at last see the propriety of your claims; *they will surrender their prejudices to their patriotism, and, receiving you as fellow subjects and fellow-freemen, will in the end give an honest victory to their intellect and their understanding.* In common with the rest of their country, I lament that by the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, your expectations of redress should have received so great a discouragement; but I shall despond, indeed, *if the departure of his Excellency was to be followed by the restoration of the old system of government and its advisers. If restored to their power, I have said, they would extinguish their country; after mature deliberation, I feel myself obliged to repeat the expression in its fullest extent.*

It is on the same due consideration I must again repeat another part of a former answer, where I have the honour to express my entire concurrence with those who have remonstrated to the throne against the restoration of that destructive and degrading system of Government. Committed as I feel myself to support to the utmost of my poor abilities, my countrymen and their just efforts, and to share the unjust resentments to which such efforts may expose them, I have the honour to be your very humble servant,

HENRY GRATTAN.

ADDRESS OF THE GENTLEMEN AND FREEHOLDERS OF THE COUNTY OF GALWAY.

To the Right Honourable Henry Grattan.

Sir,—We lament with you, but we condole with the empire, that some malignant influence has caused you to retreat from your ministerial situation; we lament that you have lost power, inasmuch as we deplore that the active influence of virtue is diminished. *As patriots, we hailed the auspicious inaugurations of virtue and talent in the Irish Cabinet; as patriots, we lament it is suspended.* While you could influence, we had no doubt but that we should be united into one people, by the removal of every civil distinction arising from religious difference of opinion, and that thereby we should deserve the name of a nation.

Sir, it is highly honourable to your nature, although not to the age we live in, that your dismission was supposed *a necessary and previous step to the return of some that are not reputed to love the people.*

Charles Blake, High Sheriff.

MR. GRATTAN'S ANSWER.

Gentlemen,—In or out of confidence, with or without a share of power, in all the changes of political life, I am attached to your interests for ever.

Ministers every hour may precipitate, but *the country is a fixed light, and in that luminary I shall never want an object to serve and to contemplate.* The late Lord Lieutenant, who so wisely and mildly administered this country, was pleased to honour me with a certain share of his confidence. I feel myself particularly happy when the choice of the purest mind is confirmed by the approbation of my country.

In your address to me, so kind and so honourable, you much over-rate my talents. I hope you do not over-rate my principles; but whatever they are, talents or principles, they are at the service of the public. *Nor do I know of any question more a part of that service, than the one you so justly recommend—the emancipation of the Catholics.* Those who may succeed to direct the councils of this country, could not have a prouder opportunity, nor do I know of any legacy to bequeath them more valuable, than

the power of giving freedom to such a portion of their fellow-subjects.

I would accompany that bequest with a parting prayer, "That whoever shall be your ministers, they may exceed their predecessors in talents, and rival them in patriotism; and, above all, *that they may avoid the dreadful system of abuses and grievances, of tyranny and plunder, that formerly blemished the government of their country.*" To exercise the functions of a minister, it is necessary to have the confidence of the Sovereign; *but there is another qualification for the minister of a free country, not less indispensable than the choice of the King—it is, love of the people!!*

Gentlemen, I have the honour to be, with the greatest esteem, your most humble servant,

HENRY GRATTAN.

THE ADDRESS OF THE STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY TO MR. GRATTAN.

SIR,—We, the students of the University of Dublin, entering with the warmest sympathy into the universal feeling and interest of our countrymen, beg leave to unite our voice with theirs in declaring our admiration of your great and uncommon talents, and a reliance on your steady patriotism and unshaken integrity. We have with sorrow beheld the removal of a beloved Viceroy, *whose arrival we regarded as the promise of public reform, and his presence the pledge of general tranquillity.*

If this event should be accompanied (as we have reason to apprehend) by your removal from His Majesty's councils in this nation, our regret will have received the last additional circumstance of aggravation, and our despondency will be complete. Relying, however, on the wisdom and benignity of His Majesty, we yet entertain a hope that the nation will not be deprived of the salutary measures flowing from your councils and advice, and *that the harmony and strength of Ireland will be founded on the solid basis of Catholic Emancipation, and the reform of those grievances which have inflamed public indignation.*

We therefore entreat you to persevere in exerting the full energy of your splendid talents for the attainment of those objects which the present alarming posture of affairs, and the consenting wishes of the nation so loudly demand.

THOMAS MOORE, Chairman.
N. WILLIS, Secretary.

MR. GRATTAN'S ANSWER.

INGENUOUS YOUNG MEN;—For this effusion of the heart, I owe you more than ordinary gratitude, and am proud to sympathize in your native, honest, and unadulterated impressions. I receive your address as the offering of a young year—a better garland than the artificial honours of a court; it is the work of disinterested hands, and the present of uncontaminated hearts. May that ardour which glows in your breasts long exist, and may the sentiments which you breathe long prevail; they are founded in principle, enlightened by letters, and supported by spirit. The subjects which you mention I recommend, I feel, and pursue. I lament the recall of a patriot Viceroy. Assisted by men much abler than myself, the reform of that system you condemn I shall not fail to attempt; bound, as I now am, to the rising, as well as the passing age, and happy, as I shall be, to go on in the service of both, I join in your fullest wishes for the Catholics; and I feel the important service which you now render them, by marking in their favour the sentiments of the rising generation; doing, at the same time, so much honour to yourselves, when you give, I had almost said, your first vote in favour of your country.

I am bound to your University by every tie of affection and duty. The sentiments of your address give me a new and just opportunity of saying to her, through you—"*Esto perpetua*, thou seat of science, and mother of virtue!"

I am, with the sincerest regard, your most humble servant, HENRY GRATTAN.

9th April, 1795.

In late as well as in early times the Irish aristocracy have attached themselves too much to party in England, and have forgotten the real interests of their own nation. The wiser policy would have been to have attended exclusively to their own country,—a course more patriotic, though less profitable. In the present case, the Irish opposition committed a great mistake in joining the Duke of Portland, who was a very weak, not a very sincere man, possessed of no power

whatever, and a mere instrument of Mr. Pitt. When first consulted, Mr. Grattan was against this proceeding, but afterwards was induced to assent, chiefly through the interference of Mr. Burke, as stated by him in one of the foregoing letters. The Irish leaders should have seen through Mr. Pitt's arts, and that his real object was to weaken the Fox party, and strengthen his own; and it was a mistake to think that Mr. Pitt, who, as well as the King, had strove to break down the aristocracy of England (as Lord Thurlow observed of the latter), would have allowed a Whig interest to grow up in Ireland, under the Duke of Portland, and have sanctioned the existence of a body acting against the Cabinet of England. The Opposition completely deceived themselves: it was not possible for them to remain in office, more particularly as they were undermined at home; for Lord Clare and Mr. Beresford never would have joined them. Their surest plan would have been to have declined both office and opposition, and have offered to Mr. Pitt to give up the latter, provided he would grant the Catholic question. This was a policy that Mr. Grattan would gladly have pursued, but others were not inclined to adopt such a chivalrous and disinterested course. They had a large party to uphold, and many friends to provide for. Undoubtedly, as it turned out, the business was managed very unfortunately, and for the peace of Ireland, most fatally. The policy of Mr. Pitt was a most dangerous one, and proved nearly ruinous to the empire: it showed how little confidence the Irish people could place in any British minister, and again confirmed the justice of Mr. Flood's remark as to "*the generous credulity of the Irish nation.*"

On the 31st of March, a few days after Lord

Fitzwilliam's departure, Lord Camden arrived*—a great name, but with principles very different from those of his illustrious relation—the instrument of a desperate faction, instead of the impartial governor of an independent nation. On the 21st of April, Mr. Grattan moved in the House of Commons for a Committee on the state of the nation. He then declared — "That Catholic emancipation was not only the concession of the British Cabinet, but its precise engagement. My friends declared they would never support any government that would resist that Bill, and it was agreed to by that quarter with perfect concurrence." Mr. George Ponsonby said he pledged his reputation on the truth of the statements as to the powers granted to Lord Fitzwilliam. The remarks which Mr. Grattan made respecting the British Cabinet, were so applicable then, and in subsequent periods proved to be so true, that they are worthy of being recorded:—

"It is a matter of melancholy reflection to consider *how little that Cabinet knows any thing relating to Ireland. Ireland is a subject it considers with a lazy contumely, and picks up here and there by accident or design, interested and erroneous intelligence.* I am well aware how much on a late occasion the friends of the last Administration were grossly misrepresented to that Cabinet, and how the disposition and temper of the people in general were misstated and traduced, and how deaf the ears of that Cabinet were to the representation of the Viceroy, while open to the tales of the interested and discontented. * * * * The British Ministers in 1792, gave hopes to the Catholics. The new colleagues in 1794, gave hopes; and both have now united in disappointing those hopes which they both had excited. The public disappointment on this point is to be charged

* After swearing in the Lord Lieutenant, a riot occurred; a mob attacked the Chancellor, the Archbishop of Armagh, and Mr. Beresford, on their return from the Castle. The Chancellor was struck on the head with a stone, but was not severely injured; the military were called out, and the populace were dispersed.

to them—so is the disappointment on the general state of affairs; they send over a Viceroy professedly to unite and satisfy the people; he proceeds on the reform of certain abuses, and gets a great supply of money and men, and then they recall him in the occupation of his reforms. Having retained the money, they recall their Minister of reformation, because he has displaced some of the ministers of abuses. They do this with as little regard to the feelings of the country as to her interest, and they produce by this act, which they say is done for the preservation of the empire, an unanimity against the Government, after Lord Fitzwilliam produced an unanimity in its favour.

"What is the effect of this on the empire, for whose preservation it is said to have taken place? They damp the recruiting service, stop subscription, and convert a nation of support into a nation of remonstrance. They offer this affront to the only, or almost the only, nation, that stood by England; and while they are subsidising false or doubtful allies, they strike that country who has not received, but has given aid to them; and they do this in the very moment in which she makes her exertion in their favour. They excite a domestic fever at the hazard of the general interest, for no object, or for an object too despicable or too criminal to be mentioned.

"I wish most ardently to distinguish the British nation and the British administration; and that *whatever indisposition their misconduct may excite, it shall be confined to them, and never damp the national affection for Great Britain, which I hope will be immortal.* It is said that the people are irritated:—Who irritated them? The Cabinet of England. Who converted national harmony into national discontent? The Cabinet of England.

"Gentlemen have mentioned publications, and redresses, and remonstrances, entered into by the people. I have seen some which do honour to their authors: just in their resentment; manly in their conception; and nothing less than the occasion called for. I heartily join in such remonstrances, and, with them, *I reprobate that pernicious and profligate system and its abettors, which disgraced this country, and with them I deprecate its return.* I have not seen all the addresses and publications of the time, but I believe there never, from any description of the people, appeared a composition so blasted as that horrid declaration which we all remember, and which asserted, '*That certain*

parliamentary provisions ought to be defended, as expedient to buy the members—political expedients; and as such to be defended.'* Such a declaration could not come from the people; and was worthy to corrupt the lips of a herald of profligacy.

"I have had occasion to make various answers to different addresses. I remember them well; *I re-assert them; if they have given offence I am ready to maintain them. I am here ready to meet enquiry; I am here to confront my enemies, and stand by my country!!!*"

These last words produced a great sensation in the House. Mr. Grattan, in his defiance to the Government, boldly threw down the gauntlet; but Mr. Pitt's supporters feared to take it up. The perfidy that had been practised was about to be proved by the person who had treated with Mr. Pitt, and who had never been guilty of any dereliction of promise or principle, and whose regard to truth was ever sacred. If the motion had been granted, the duplicity of the entire proceedings would have been fully exposed, and the British minister would have been convicted. The friends of Mr. Grattan vigorously supported him, and at the concluding sentence their cheers of approbation grew loud and vehement; the public and both galleries† caught the contagion, and in their sympathy with the Opposition, burst into loud and repeated applauses. The House was thrown into confusion—the Speaker in vain interposed;—at length he was obliged to direct the galleries to be cleared, and order was then restored. The motion, however, was rejected by 158 to 48, and thus were cast away the affections of the Irish

* Lord Clare's intimation at the period of the Regency.

† There were two galleries in the Irish House of Commons. Mr. Foster (Speaker) had narrowed the space, and reserved the one behind the chair for the friends of the members and for the Government: ladies were admitted into both. A painting of the House when Mr. Grattan moved the claim of Right in 1782 (most of the distinguished characters taken from original portraits) is in possession of the Editor.

Catholics, and the friendship of the Irish nation. Anger and resentment now took the place of hope and joy; the Catholics began to despair; the Protestants were anew excited against them;—these parties broke off the friendship which had so auspiciously begun, and finally separated to their mutual destruction and disgrace. They abandoned the rights and liberties that should have been restored to the one party; they departed from that high character which had been just acquired by the other, and ultimately sacrificed the peace and honour of their country. Both parties ran into extremes: the one had recourse to violence and bloodshed, the other turned for refuge and revenge to France; and thus was effected their ruin as a nation. But a few years before, the Irish had imposed on their ancient riot—order; on their religious discord—silence; they had preferred their claim of right with modesty; they had supported it with moderation;* they had obtained it; but now, goaded by a wicked set of men on one side, and seduced by wild and foolish leaders on the other, they suffered themselves to be driven into insurrection and civil war; they rebelled, the one against the King, the other against the Constitution, and both became nothing. They lost their early acquisitions; their rank in the scale of nations, and their well-earned fame for moderation and wisdom; and have only left to history the melancholy task of recording the sad catastrophe, perhaps intended by Providence to serve as an instructive lesson to kings, ministers, and people.

* The debt of the nation amounted, in 1795, to 3,820,000*l.*; in five years afterwards it increased, at the Union, to 25,000,000*l.*; a few years after to 150,000,000*l.*; and in 1816, Ireland was proclaimed bankrupt. What a contrast between the prosperity that followed after 1782, and the consequences that followed from 1800! and what a proof it is that nations should govern themselves, and never trust the management of their affairs to others!

The Catholic question was now speedily disposed of.* On the 4th of May (1795), Mr. Grattan moved that the bill be read a second time; it was opposed with increased virulence. Mr. Toler (Solicitor General), in a prepared harangue, replete with prejudice, moved its rejection, which was carried by 155 to 48. On this occasion, Arthur O'Connor made a very able and talented speech in favour of the bill. Doctor Duigenan and Mr. Robert Johnson (afterwards judge) distinguished themselves by sentiments very violent and very hostile to the people. Mr. Grattan's splendid speeches on this great question are too well known to render necessary even a partial recital; one passage, however, which relates to the passing events of that time, may be referred to.

"To what allies and assistance have this ministry resorted, who, for the sake of the connection, would exclude Irish Catholics? Are not their armies mostly Catholics? Is not your militia mostly Catholics? Is not a great portion of their seamen Catholics? Are not the princes with whom they are leagued Catholics? The King of Prussia is not so, nor the Dutch, I acknowledge. What Catholic prince have they not sought? What Popish potentate have they not trusted? Have they not canvassed every Papist in Europe, and bought every pennyworth of blood, and every pound of flesh, and begged of princes to take their subsidies?—and do they now cast off three millions of Irish? They think it better, it seems, to buy Prussian faith with English money, than Irish soldiers with Irish privileges. They think it better to neglect unanimity against France, and throw up new dikes and fortifications against the Pope and the Pretender. They see, with

* The Catholics had assembled in Dublin, and urged Mr. Grattan to bring forward their claims; and, apprehensive that Mr. Pitt meant to propose the measure of Union, they passed a resolution, pledging themselves to resist their emancipation if proposed to be conceded on the ignominious terms of an acquiescence in the fatal measure of a Union, which they pronounced to be a surrender of the liberties of their country.

dismay, two or three servants of the Crown dismissed; the exclusion of three millions of men they regard not, it seems; they alienate the subject to preserve the connection. At what does the English cabinet tremble? At the loss of Holland?—No! they bore that well—very well. The loss of Brabant?—No! they bore that well—very well. The anxious state of the West Indies?—No! that too they bore very well; but when a proposal is made to give Irish subjects constitutional privileges, their fears, such as they might have felt at the event of their own operations, begin to scare the ministry of Great Britain. So trembled the Carthaginian assembly. Those great men who had the honour to preside over the disgrace of their country, had borne the loss of their armies, the loss of their elephants, the loss of their power, with much philosophy; but when something that touched *their own cabal*, some tax on themselves was proposed, then they also trembled. The senate of Carthage trembled; like the British ministry, they were moved by nothing, but by the least of their misfortunes."

The session of Parliament ended in June. A motion of censure on Lord Westmoreland, proposed by Sir Lawrence Parsons was rejected. When Viceroy, in the preceding year, he had sent the troops out of the country without leave of Parliament; and the law passed in 1769, during the administration of Lord Townsend, directed that 12,000 men should always be kept in Ireland, and on this compact 3000 additional men were voted, so as to raise the Irish army to 15,000. In violation of this arrangement, Lord Westmoreland withdrew the army, and reduced it to 7000. His conduct was, however, defended, and, among others, by Colonel Wellesley (Duke of Wellington), who was then aide-de-camp to Lord Camden. Another motion, proposed by Mr. Curran, to address the King on the state of the country, was equally unsuccessful; and the only important measure of the session was the act to establish the Roman Catholic College of

Maynooth, for which a vote of 8,000*l.* a-year was passed—as the Catholic clergy were liable to be affected in their education abroad by anti-English sentiments, it was thought advisable to adopt this mode of preventing it.

The change of Government was now felt throughout the country. Protestant and Catholic broke out into acts of hostility: the Defenders* increased in numbers and violence, and in order to counteract them, *the Peep of Day Boys,* as they were originally termed, now came forward in a new and more dangerous character. Inflamed in a great degree by the violent speeches of Dr. Duigenan, Mr. Toler, Mr. Johnson, and others, who in the late Catholic debate had made vehement appeals to the prejudices of that party, on the subject of the glorious memory of King William and the Revolution of 1688, invoking all *loyal Protestants* to unite in the defence of its principles against the Roman Catholics. These men assumed the name of Orangemen—said they were united to uphold the Protestant ascendancy, and commenced a fierce and almost open war against their Catholic countrymen. The parties met at a place called the Diamond, in the county of Armagh, in the month of September, 1795, where a conflict took place, in which the Catholics were worsted; and ever since the country has been a prey to the fury and folly of the contending parties,—and Orangeism has scarcely ceased to exist, even at the

* The Defenders, who were Roman Catholics, though barbarously treated, and almost put out of the pale of society by the Orange party, had not yet joined the United Irishmen; the latter, however, were greatly assisted by the violence of Lord Clare and the high Protestants in their efforts to effect the junction. Mr. Nevin, in his Pieces of Irish History, confirms this when he speaks of "*the great probability of getting into the confederation* at the end of that year *all the Defenders.*"—New York Edition, 1807.

period in which these pages are written. Such was the height to which the disturbances arose, that the governor of the county of Armagh (Lord Gosford), found it necessary, in December, to convene a meeting of the magistracy, and from his speech on that occasion, the situation of the country, and the excesses committed upon the Catholics, will best appear. After mentioning that they had assembled to devise a plan to check the enormities that disgraced the county, his lordship gave this lamentable description :

"It is no secret that a persecution, accompanied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty which have in all ages distinguished the dreadful calamity, is now raging in this country. *Neither age nor sex, nor even acknowledged innocence as to any guilt in the late disturbances, is sufficient to excite mercy, much less to afford protection!!!*

"The only crime which the wretched objects of this ruthless persecution are charged with, is a crime, indeed, of easy proof; *it is simply a profession of the Roman Catholic faith*, or an intimate connection with a person professing that faith. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of this new species of delinquency, and the sentence they have pronounced is equally concise and terrible—*'tis nothing less than a confiscation of all property, and an immediate banishment!!!*

"It would be extremely painful, and surely unnecessary, to detail the horrors that attend the execution of so wide and tremendous a proscription—*a proscription, that certainly exceeds in the comparative number of those it consigns to ruin and misery, every example that ancient or modern history can supply;* for where have we heard, or in what story of human cruelties have we read, of more than half the inhabitants of a populous country deprived at one blow of the means, as well as of the fruits of their industry, and *driven, in the midst of an inclement season, to seek a shelter for themselves and their helpless families where chance may guide them!!!*

"This is no exaggerated picture of the horrid scenes now acting in this country, yet surely it is sufficient to awaken sentiments of indignation and compassion in the coldest bosom. *These horrors, I say, are now acting, and acting*

with impunity. The spirit of impartial justice (without which law is nothing better than an instrument of tyranny) has for a time disappeared in this country, and the supineness of the magistracy of Armagh is become a common topic of conversation in every corner of the kingdom.

"It is said, in reply, the Roman Catholics are dangerous. They may be so—they may be dangerous from their numbers, and still more dangerous from the undoubted views they have been encouraged to entertain; but I will venture to assert, (without fear of contradiction,) that upon those very grounds, these terrible proceedings are not more contrary to humanity than they are to sound policy."

Lord Gosford, who seems to have been assailed by much violence and abuse, thought it necessary to declare that he was a Protestant—holding his property under a Protestant title, which, with the blessing of God, he was resolved to defend to the utmost of his power,—such was the spirit, or, perhaps, the *necessity* of the times. He then submitted a series of resolutions, two of which were as follows:

"That it appears to this meeting, that the county of Armagh is at this moment in a state of uncommon disorder; the Roman Catholic inhabitants are grievously oppressed by lawless persons unknown, who attack and plunder their houses by night, and threaten them with instant destruction, unless they immediately abandon their lands and habitations."

"That the Committee of Magistrates shall use every legal means in their power to stop the progress of the persecution now carrying on by an ungovernable mob against the Roman Catholic inhabitants of this county."

Such was the state of the north of Ireland under Lord Camden's administration,—such the result of recalling Lord Fitzwilliam, and changing the system of government. In truth, Mr. Pitt seemed to have abdicated the function of minister, and evinced a reckless and unpardonable carelessness with regard to Ireland; and having first deceived

the people, he left them a prey to the discord his supporters had fermented. The account by Lord Gosford may seem almost incredible, and many may imagine that passion and prejudice might have coloured or exaggerated the facts, and that Government would not have permitted any body of magistrates so far to neglect their duties. But in confirmation of what Lord Gosford said, an evidence has of late appeared,—an eye-witness of the facts, and whose testimony may be considered impartial, given as it is after a lapse of time, when the anger and fury of the day has subsided, and when truth may fearlessly be told, with a probability of being believed. An officer of the 24th Light Dragoons, whose regiment was sent to the north of Ireland in 1795, thus writes:

To the Editor of the Globe.

Newmarket, October 19, 1839.

"SIR * * * * * *

"As a cornet in the 24th Light Dragoons†, then commanded by the late Lord Wm. Bentinck, I accompanied the regiment to Ireland in 1795. We disembarked at Dublin, and proceeded to Clonmel, from whence, in the autumn of that year, a squadron was suddenly ordered, in consequence of the disturbed state of the country, to proceed to Armagh. To this squadron I was attached. Very shortly after our arrival, the Caithness Highlanders, commanded by Sir Thomas, then Major Molyneux, relieved a regiment of Irish militia stationed at Armagh. The county of Armagh was then in a very disturbed state, arising from the feuds between the Protestant and Catholic population, *unhappily too much encouraged by the dominant party;* but of these religious dissensions the Orange Societies, fostered and encouraged by the father of the present Colonel Verner, had their origin. *The avowed object of the Protestant party was to drive the Catholics out of the country.*

"In the course of the following year, the whole regiment took up its quarters at Armagh, and the neighbourhood. It so happened that I commanded a detachment of the

† The name is in the Army List of that year.

regiment at Loughall, in the very centre of that part of the county of Armagh where the disturbances most prevailed, *and not very far distant from the spot where the Battle of the Diamond took place. There I remained several months, and during that period I had witnessed the excesses committed by the Orange party*, who now began to form themselves into lodges, and the dreadful persecutions to which the Catholic inhabitants were subjected. Night after night I have seen the sackings and burnings of the dwellings of these poor people. And notwithstanding the active exertions of the Sovereign of Armagh, under whose orders the military frequently scoured the country, our movements were so closely watched, that these depredations were continued almost with impunity. When we arrived at a burning dwelling, the perpetrators had fled across the country, and their course could only be traced by the fires they left in their progress.

"Many of the Orangemen, however, notwithstanding the secrecy with which they conducted their proceedings, were discovered on private information, and brought to trial. But most of them, through the influence of their party, escaped, either altogether or with slight punishment.

"In one case, a most atrocious one, a man had been sentenced to death; this man's sentence was respited. And I well remember the whole country round being illuminated with bonfires in manifestation of the joy of the Orangemen on that occasion. The result was an increased measure of persecution: *many poor families were driven from their homes, their dwellings burnt, and themselves obliged to take shelter among their Catholic brethren in Connaught.* These outrages were not unfrequently accompanied with bloodshed.

"I may mention one of these dreadful scenes, of which I was myself an eye-witness, during our nightly patrol. We had already reached a heap of burning ruins, when a shot was heard apparently about a quarter of a mile from the fire. On proceeding to the spot we discovered a dying man, whom the miscreants had shot in his house, in their retreat from the fire. They had fired through the window into the room where the man was sitting with his family. The poor fellow died a few minutes after our arrival.

"It is impossible for me to describe, at this distance of time, the horrors and atrocities I witnessed during that period, which Major Molyneux describes as being without

disturbance. Indeed, such was the state of the county of Armagh, that our regiment was quartered in the different mansions of the gentry of the county.

"Mr. O'Sullivan states that the Battle of the Diamond broke the neck of the Irish rebellion. It so happened that I was quartered at Market-hill, the house of Lord Gosford, when the rebellion of 1798 broke out, *and I can positively assert, and I appeal to the history of those times, that the Catholics had no share in the disturbances of that period, at least in the north of Ireland.*

"The rebellion, it is well known, was brought out by the United Irishmen, who were none of them Catholics; and not one of the leaders who were convicted and executed in the counties of Down and Antrim were of that creed. On the contrary, when the troops assembled at Castle Dawson, under General Knox, a most active magistrate, a resident in that town, Mr. Sheil, who with his sons, were in a corps of yeomanry, and took a most decided part in the suppression of the rebellion, were Roman Catholics.

AN OLD OFFICER OF CAVALRY.

This letter was written in consequence of the proceedings of some Irish Protestant clergymen, who of late years had gone to England to attend public meetings, and abused the religion of the people of Ireland. Some false charges having been made by them respecting the Catholics, the officer who had been present at the transactions alluded to, thought it an act of justice to the Irish to state the circumstances as they came to his knowledge, and accordingly he published the foregoing letter. In the debate on the Insurrection Act, in February, 1796, Mr. Grattan also described the conduct of the Orangemen.

"He had received the most dreadful accounts; that their object was the extermination of all the Catholics of that country. It was a persecution conceived in the bitterness of bigotry, carried on with the most ferocious barbarity, by a banditti, who, being of the religion of the State, had committed with the greater audacity and confidence, the most horrid murders, and had proceeded from robbery and massacre to extermination; they had re-

pealed, by their own authority, all the laws lately passed in favour of the Catholics, had established in the place of those laws the inquisition of a mob, resembling Lord George Gordon's fanatics, equalling them in outrage, and surpassing them far in perseverance and success.

"Their modes of outrage were as various as they were atrocious;—they sometimes forced by terror the masters of families to dismiss their Catholic servants;—they sometimes forced landlords by terrors to dismiss their Catholic tenantry;—they seized as deserters numbers of Catholic weavers, sent them to the county gaol, transmitted them to Dublin, where they remained in close prison, until some lawyers, from compassion, pleaded their cause, and procured their enlargement, nothing appearing against them of any kind whatsoever. Those insurgents, who called themselves Orange Boys, or Protestant Boys—that is, a banditti of marauders, committing massacre in the name of God, and exercising despotic power in the name of liberty;—those insurgents have organized their rebellion, and have formed themselves into a committee, who sit and try the Catholic weavers and inhabitants, when apprehended, falsely and illegally as deserters; this rebellious committee they call the Committee of Elders, who, when the unfortunate Catholic is torn from his family and his loom, and brought before them, sit in judgment upon his case; if he gives them liquor or money, they sometimes discharge him; otherwise, they send him then to a recruiting-office as a deserter. *They had very generally given the Catholics notice to quit their farms and dwellings*, which notice is plastered on their houses, and conceived in these short but plain words,—"*Go to hell! Connaught will not receive you—fire and faggot!—Will Thresham and John Thrustout.*" They followed these notices by a faithful and punctual execution of the horrid threat, soon after visited the house, robbed the family, and destroyed what they did not take; and, finally, completed the atrocious persecutions, by forcing the unfortunate inhabitants to leave their land, their dwellings, and their trade, and to travel with their miserable family, and with whatever their miserable family could save from the wreck of their houses and tenements, and take refuge in villages as fortifications against invaders, where they described themselves, as I have seen in their affidavits, in the following manner:—'We, (mentioning their names,) formerly of Armagh,

weavers, now of no fixed placed of abode, or means of living," &c. In many instances this banditti of persecution threw down the houses of the tenantry, or what they call, racked the house, so that the family must fly or be buried in the grave of their own cabin. The extent of the murders that have been committed by this atrocious and rebellious banditti, I have heard, but have not heard them so ascertained as to state them to this House; but from all the enquiries I could make, I collect that *the Catholic inhabitants of Armagh have been actually put out of the protection of the law; that the magistrates have been supine or partial, and that the horrid banditti has met with complete success, and from the magistracy with very little discouragement.* This horrid persecution, this abominable barbarity, and this general extermination, have been acknowledged by the magistracy, who, finding the evil had now proceeded to so shameful an excess, that it at length obliged themselves to cry out against it, came to the following resolution,* which is an evidence of the designs of the insurgents, and of their success."

Such is the account given by Mr. Grattan of the Orangemen. Their violent conduct assisted greatly the United Irishmen; and in the memoir† given to Government by Messrs. O'Connor, Emmett, and M'Neven, in 1798, the latter states that "*they were most exceedingly indebted to the persecution by the Orange faction, as the Catholics began to think they had no refuge but in joining the Union.*"

In the autumn and winter of 1795, the Defenders spread rapidly from the north, and their principles tainted even the county of Dublin and the metropolis. The test of the confederacy contained an injunction of fidelity to the King, but of implicit obedience to their leaders; they appeared in arms in large bodies, attacked houses, and plundered them of their arms; waylaid and fired at magistrates, assassinated witnesses, and com-

* See page 234.

† Detailed statement of the origin and progress of the Irish Union, delivered to the Irish Government,—page 5.

menced a horrid civil war. Government formed two camps, one at the Naul, the other at Loughlinstown, seven miles south of Dublin; the latter was continued throughout the winter. Lord Carhampton, at the desire of Government, proceeded to the west to quell the disturbances; he went before the judges, and opened the gaols; and without any form of trial, or any warrant but on his own order, took out the prisoners, and sent them on board the fleet,—a tender sailed along the coast to receive them. Several magistrates apprehended numbers of persons and committed them to gaol on informal warrants;* they followed the example, and rivalled the conduct of Lord Carhampton, without the pretence of a military commission, and assumed the power of transporting the king's subjects without trial, sentence, or condemnation. Some of these victims were tied upon cars and carried away, weeping in bitter agony, and crying aloud for trial. It was stated that upwards of one thousand persons were thus illegally taken up and transported. In some cases writs of Habeas Corpus were applied for, and granted by the judges, who could not but admit the illegality of these proceedings; some individuals, more spirited than the rest, threatened reprisals, and sought to punish, as they well deserved, the perpetrators of such violent and arbitrary measures. Actions at law were commenced, Government interposed, and Parliament stopped them. These proceedings, far from affording any temporary relief, greatly inflamed the minds of the people, and aggravated public calamity. In December the Government tried the Defenders for high treason;

* One of Lord Carhampton's warrants ran thus:—"*Receive the body of Oliver Corbally, charged with high treason.*—To the gaoler, &c." And as if to reward him for his conduct, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief in the following year, October, 1796.

they succeeded in the case of James Weldon, on very slender testimony (one witness only was required on such cases in Ireland); they failed against several others, and the remaining trials were put off to the ensuing year. Such were the calamities of Ireland at the present moment: unfortunately they were not completed, and proved but the forerunners of others still greater, and more deplorable.

England, at this period, was not tranquil: the King had been fired at on his way to open the Parliament, on the 3rd of November, 1795; the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended; the Seditious Meetings Bill had passed; the public mind in that country was greatly convulsed, and its impressions were quickly communicated, and too readily caught by a sensitive and an injured community, so that every symptom appeared unfavourable for the tranquillity of Ireland. The loss of popular measures; the recall of a popular Viceroy; the cruel treatment of the Catholics in the north; the illegal measures of the magistrates, and their violation of the laws and constitution of the country, drove the people to the extreme of despair. But the bitter cup of Irish affliction was not yet filled; Parliament had yet to assemble; and when it met, it sanctioned, nay, it commended, this illegal violence; it extolled the authors; it excused the perpetrators; *more*, it indemnified them!!!

Parliament met in January, 1796. The speech from the throne adverted to the seditious and treasonable associations in the country. Mr. Grattan, desirous to avoid all vexatious opposition, merely submitted, by way of amendment, a proposition regarding the commerce of the country; namely, that Irish manufactures should be admitted into Great Britain on terms as advantageous

as those on which British manufactures were admitted into Ireland; this, though reasonable, was rejected by 122 to 14. The numbers on this division showed the state of parties in the House; the Opposition, in fact, had vanished with Lord Fitzwilliam, and never again rallied. Government, thus encouraged, proceeded in consequence headlong, and introduced what was called "*A vigour beyond the law,*" sweeping every thing before them, and leading captive an obsequious Parliament, and a furious and prostrate people. They passed an Insurrection Bill to prevent the peasantry being out of their houses after sunset and before sunrise, and an Indemnity Bill to absolve all magistrates from their illegal acts—it might be called, a bill to protect Lord Carhampton; Mr. Grattan moved that the judges who had gone circuit in the disturbed counties should attend at the bar, and give evidence as to the necessity of the Indemnity Bill; but this was rejected without a division. On the 20th of February, the Attorney-General (Wolfe) proposed four resolutions declaratory of the disturbed state of the country, and the necessity of granting more effectual powers to the magistrates. As these resolutions alluded only to the Defenders, Mr. Grattan proposed some amendments respecting the proceedings of the Orangemen, and the outrages they had committed on the Catholics; but these also were rejected without a division. On this subject Lord Edward Fitzgerald expressed his opinion in an open and manly manner; and as he very shortly afterwards was unfortunately implicated in the conspiracy which he then deprecated, his speech is worth recording. The sentiments were just, and the advice was proper:—

Sir,—I shall oppose this resolution, because I think that this resolution will not prevent the crimes of which

the right honourable gentleman complains. The disturbances of the country, Sir, are not to be remedied by any coercive measures, however strong. Such measures will tend rather to exasperate than to remove the evil. Nothing, Sir, can effect this and restore tranquillity to the country, but a serious and candid endeavour of Government and of this House, to redress the grievances of the people. Redress those, and the people will return to their allegiance and their duty. Suffer them to continue, and neither your resolutions nor your bills will have any effect. I shall therefore, Sir, oppose not only this resolution, but all the resolutions which the right hon. gentleman has read to you, except, perhaps, one—that which goes to constitute the written testimony of a dying witness, good evidence. This, I think, is fair, and likely to facilitate the course of justice, without violently infringing, as all the other resolutions seem to do, the liberty of the subject.

The resolutions were passed—the Insurrection Bill followed. Mr. Grattan vainly attempted to get it recommitted and amended. All his efforts, and those of Messrs. Ponsonby, Curran, Fletcher, Jephson, and Sir Lawrence Parsons proved unavailing. Thus the magistrates were enabled to declare any county in a state of insurrection; to break open houses at any hour to search for arms; to arrest and send on board the king's fleet any one whom they suspected, and imprison every man whom they found out of his house between sun-set and sun-rise;—and this at a time when the illegal acts of the magistracy rendered it necessary to bring in a bill of indemnity to screen them from prosecution and punishment. Mr. Curran gave the appropriate designation to those acts, when he termed them "A Bloody Code!"

On the 15th of April, 1796, Parliament was prorogued. Lord Camden, in the speech from the throne, stated that "the vigorous measures adopted to suppress insurrection and outrage promised the most salutary consequences, and would

demonstrate to the people the firmness and *temper* of Parliament;—that all were equally interested in the common cause of upholding their religion, their laws, and their Constitution;" but he forgot that the religion of the people his partisans had grossly reviled, the laws his officers had daringly broken, and the Constitution they had openly violated: one portion still remained—the Habeas Corpus Act had not yet been suspended; but when Parliament met, that bar was removed. Thus the people, by their violence and outrage, armed the government with arguments and weapons to put down public liberty, and destroy every vestige of a free Constitution; and, always the surest instruments of their own servitude, they laid, during the government of Lord Camden, the foundation of that tyranny which was completed under Lord Cornwallis. Still they were not aware of the deep malignity of their oppressors, and that Mr. Pitt and his equally cruel and cold-hearted Viceroy would go much farther,—hand over the people to the lash, and to tortures, and tolerate a system of bloodshed that savages would have been disgraced by!

While we condemn the violent and outrageous conduct of the Defenders, the condition of the peasantry should be taken into account; for it is to be observed that the lot of the great mass of the lower orders was wretched in the extreme; and although this could be no palliation for their offences, yet it should have claimed for them from the higher classes some care and consideration. The absence of the great English landed proprietary, and the want, in a considerable degree, of a resident gentry,—the slow progress which manufactures made, and which were confined principally to the north of Ireland, kept the working classes in a state of great depression. Their

wretched situation had been strongly depicted in the debates on the tithe question of 1788 and 89, when Mr. Grattan made repeated and memorable exertions for their relief. On this occasion Lord Clare (then Attorney-general) represented the condition of the lower orders as most abject and degraded, and stated that they were absolutely "*ground to powder*;" yet, notwithstanding such a declaration from such a leading member of the Government, and now grown so powerful, no effort was ever made for their relief; and even the project of opening the splendid river (the Shannon), that certain, and, perhaps, future great emporium of wealth, though urged upon Parliament and Government, was wholly disregarded. This subject now attracted the attention of the Opposition, and an effort was made to show the people that while Parliament was determined to punish their offences, it was not insensible to their distress, nor careless to provide a remedy. Mr. Curran, on the 28th of January, moved for a committee to enquire into the state of the peasantry and the prices of labour. He spoke very ably for two hours and a half; he was supported by Mr. Grattan, and by Mr. Jephson, who delivered an excellent speech, full of research, and replete with sentiments of justice and humanity. All was vain. The motion for the relief of the poor was rejected by 127 to 16; while that for a bill to indemnify the magistrates for their illegal conduct, passed on the same night without a division!!

The Whig Club, that of late had been tranquil, and remained inactive, through a desire not to inflame the minds of the people, thought proper to interfere and take up the case while a ray of hope remained, and before matters should come to extremities. They produced a report on the

condition of the Irish peasantry, which, as it contains some curious and interesting statements, is here subjoined.*

Tuesday, 12th July, 1796.

* At a meeting of the Whig Club, held this day, the Right Hon. Henry Grattan in the Chair, the following Report was received from the Committee appointed to Enquire into the State of the Labouring Poor, which was agreed to by the Club, and leave given them to sit again.

Resolved, That it appears to this committee, that in many parts of this kingdom, during the last winter and spring, the price of labour continued to be not more than 6*d.* per day; and in the same places, and at the same time, the price of oatmeal was not less, but often considerably more than 18*d.* a stone, and that of potatoes not less, but often considerably more than 3½*d.* per stone, and that at such rates of provision, 6*d.* a day was insufficient for the support of the labourer and his family.

That it appears to this committee, that in several counties the common price of potatoes, for the last three years, at an average, was not less than 3*d.* per stone, and that of oatmeal not less than 15*d*, and that in those parts the average price of labour the year round is not more than 7*d.* per day; and that according to those rates of provisions, 7*d.* a day is not sufficient for the support of the labourer and his family.

That it appears to this committee, that there is in many parts of those counties a description of labourer called the cottier, who pays from 30*s.* to 40*s.* for his house and garden, and from 30*s.* to 40*s.* for the grazing of his cow, and who receives on an average but from 5*d.* to 6*d.* per day, which, in our opinion, is very inadequate to provide for the support of himself and family.

That it appears to this committee, that in some other parts of this kingdom the price of labour has considerably risen, but that in these parts the price of land and of provisions, as elsewhere, have risen, yet the price of labour has not, and that said deficiency is not supplied by employment in manufacture.

Your committee beg leave to suggest that it would be highly advantageous in those parts where the peasantry are distressed, which we are sorry to say are numerous, if the gentlemen would think proper to form committees in each barony or district, to meet for the purpose of considering the state of the labouring poor; and, among other plans that may occur, to raise in some instances the price of labour, to equalize in time of dearth the price of provision, and pay the difference between the ordinary and extraordinary charge; to advance, if necessary, money to purchase the materials of manufacture, and to secure a market for the work when manufactured, and to procure relief and medicine in case of sickness. That we conceive various new objects of benefit, and new sources of employment would present themselves to such committees when once formed, being in the nature of voluntary overseers of the poor, an existing body ready to avail themselves of every new discovery, to form plans occasionally of charitable loans, and capable of directing not only the attention, but the taste of the rich to the state of the poor, so that the rich will perhaps consider themselves interested in the appearance of their tenants and labourers, and hold the improvement of the cottage, the cottage garden, and its inhabitants, as an essential part

On the 13th of October, 1796, Parliament again assembled, in consequence of the apprehension of an invasion from France. Lord Camden in-

of the improvement of their grounds; and thus their seats may appear the growth of plenty diffused, and not the solitary instances of wealth in the midst of wretchedness, at once its neighbour and its reproach. That we conceive, in the parts referred to, the increase of the price of labour the more reasonable; not only because there has been a considerable increase in the price of provisions, but also in the pay and salaries of almost every other description of men: that within these some years last past, the salaries of the servants of Government have increased not a little: that the pay of the common soldier has been increased; and on the same principle on which his Majesty has been advised to attend to his forces, we should follow the example, and pay some attention to our fellow-subjects; that it would be extraordinary that the only order of the people, whose wages were not increased in any proportion or extent, was that order by whose labour and industry those salaries and establishments were principally fed. That such an increase is the more reasonable and the more feasible, because the prices in the produce of land, as well as the rents of land have increased considerably, and enabled the landholder and farmer to increase the price of labour. That we should further consider that in Ireland there is no poor-rate, which in England is about 2,000,000*l.* a-year, but that there is a great dearth of manufacture; a great absentee property, and a number of interests pressing on one and the same holding, and helping to impoverish each other, and the land; and that if we cannot controul the ill-consequences which proceed from these causes, we should apply with more industry to those causes which we can controul, and by controlling which we may diminish the ill effects of the others, with the greater propriety and confidence, we hope, because in sundry parts of this kingdom, and in some parts of the districts referred to, the experiment has been made. The price of the peasant's labour has been increased, much to the credit of the individual, and the advantage of the neighbourhood, which experiment proves, that the relief of the poor is not what it has been mentioned to be by those who are indisposed to the question, and wish to embarrass this, as other public questions, "a matter extremely difficult, and even impossible." That we do hope nothing more is necessary than to call the attention of gentlemen to the subject; certain as we are that there is in general much humanity in this kingdom, which only requires to be brought into action; that we beg to observe, that as the price of labour does not regularly rise with the price of provisions, so neither will it raise the same; but if the price of labour should increase the quantity of labour, it will tend to diminish the price of provisions, by increasing their quantity also; that there can be no doubt that the labourer partakes of the nature of every other animal, and if well fed will outwork the labourer who is half starved, and that it is probable what is advanced in wages, will be repaid in labour, and this mode of enabling the labourer to do more work, may be compared to the discovery of a new mechanic power in the art of husbandry. That we beg leave to observe that the peasantry of this country have left us no excuse for neglecting them, inasmuch as they do not appear to be the cause of their own poverty; that, on the contrary, the evil appears to

formed the House that, owing to the vigorous measures adopted, outrages had been in a great degree suppressed, but "that a treasonable system

proceed, not from the want of workmen, but the want of wages sufficient for their subsistence; that the comparative quantity of work is small in many places, in proportion to the number of hands ready to work, which is an evidence of a disposition to industry, and the proof of the will to labour, and the want of work; that the frequent emigrations of labourers to England for work; the quantity of labour produced at task-work; the excellence of the linen manufacture in some parts of this kingdom; the progress of tillage in others, are, to the charge of sloth made against the Irish, a complete and practical refutation;—a proof that such idle charge, is the effect of lazy pride and lazy folly in those who have nothing to do, but to reproach those who have little to eat, and get that little by hard labour,—a charge generally coming from those who have no knowledge of the country, or interest therein, save only the salaries they receive out of it, and who are themselves one of her grievances, a great obstacle to her redress, and a cause of her discontent. That it appears likewise that the poverty of the peasant does not proceed from the sloth of his family, but that the poverty of both him and his family does, in a great degree, proceed from the want of manufactures, which is the effect of prohibitions heretofore laid on our trade, which prohibitions still exist in their consequences, and have not ceased to operate on the people of this country, and their markets at home as well as abroad; that from the consequent want of manufacture in many parts, the quantity of work is little, and the price of labour, of course, low,—so that the children cannot get a livelihood by manufacture, nor the father a sufficient livelihood by labour; that it does not appear to us how the family can at all times obtain money to purchase materials for spinning, nor command at all times a market for the sale of their work; and that from these causes above all, and not from natural propensities, appear to proceed the misery and dirt observed among some of the poorer classes of the Irish, so disgraceful to their betters and not to themselves; for, on a fair consideration of their state, it appears impossible for them in many districts to obtain even sufficient subsistence for their families, and still less those changes of clothes necessary for cleanliness, or that quantity or kind of furniture and bedding which is at once essential to cleanliness and health.

Under the influence of these considerations, we are not deterred from this inquiry by the objection, that inquiries into the state of the labouring poor, with a view to their relief, are measures of inflammation; that, on the contrary, *if a neglect to investigate their condition could administer content and satisfaction, the experiment has been tried without any good effect whatsoever.* That we do conceive the labouring poor are perfectly well acquainted with their own poverty, and that our cheerful acquiescence in the same would not be a means of secresy any more than of relief. That the only objection in such inquiries could be founded in the impossibility of finding out the remedy, but that we do conceive among the various remedies which humanity and attention may and must discover, there is one very obvious and very applicable to the cases we have submitted, namely, an increase in the price of labour. That we know from experience, that unless such subjects are

of secret confederation, by administering illegal oaths, still continued, though Government had left no means untried to counteract it." The outrages on the Catholics in Armagh were left unnoticed. Nothing of conciliation was proposed, and reform and emancipation seemed consigned to oblivion. Mr. Vesey and Colonel Bagwell moved and seconded the address. Mr. Grattan moved an amendment "To represent to His Majesty that the most effectual method for strengthening the country, and promoting unanimity, was to take such measures, and to enact such laws, as would ensure to all His Majesty's subjects the blessings and privileges of the Constitution without any dis-

pressed in contempt of such objections, in no instance would this country have found redress for any grievance whatsoever. That the inquiry appears to us more seasonable, *because a system of relief should accompany a system of coercion, and the strong measures hitherto adopted, establish the necessity of remedial measures also*, in order at once to controul the spreading of the evil, and to remove in future the grounds of ever resorting again to such a system of coercion. That nothing, in our opinion, could render inquiries of this sort entirely abortive, unless it should be the revival of outrages; that in all those the offenders have shown as much weakness and folly as ferocity, and *have held out a useful instruction to the common people, that when any of the poorer orders of the people shall turn a banditti, they will be ever found weak and contemptible, their insurrection will be disappointed, and disappointed insurrection will be the cause of new systems of pains and penalties.* But that, at any time, more especially now, the country being quiet, the case of the Irish peasantry should become a matter of consideration, especially when the state of the paupers of Dublin has excited the attention of the Government; that we must applaud that good system of public care in this instance, but we should think it creates the necessity of extending the consideration beyond beggars; that it would be extraordinary indeed to cherish those only who live by charity, and to pass by those who live by labour, and by whose labour we live also; that to make the idle work, and the beggar to support himself, is in a high degree useful and commendable; that to support the labourer and to make the industrious flourish is in a still higher degree useful and commendable; and that in our opinion, the best measure is to attain the two objects, to make idleness labour, and labour prosper; that we wish to press this subject, especially now, in order to unite all orders of men by the communication of good offices, and by an exercise of public care, so that the rich may manifest their utility and virtue, and extend over the lower orders their influence and ascendancy, and establish by good offices a kind of mild and voluntary jurisdiction: thus will the higher orders be familiarized to give, and the lower to receive, and both be endeared to one another.

tinction of religion." This was seconded by Mr. B. Ponsonby, and was strongly supported by Mr. Curran, Mr. Geo. Ponsonby, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Duquery; it was, however, rejected by 149 to 12—so reduced were the numbers of the Opposition—so strong the party against the people! Some extracts from Mr. Grattan's speech deserve more attention on account of the critical and eventful period at which they were delivered. Alluding to the war, and the Continental coalition,—

"He observed on the successes of the Austrians, which, he said, were as brilliant as they were seasonable; but he requested the House to consider the situation of the empire notwithstanding those successes—Italy conquered; the left bank of the Rhine at present in the hands of France—Savoy annexed—the Alps and the Rhine her boundary—the confederacy (the Emperor only excepted) dispersed—the Spaniard in alliance with France, probably at war with England—the British excluded from the ports of Europe—the fall of the funds—and the durable and consolidated state of the French Republic, with great addition of territory and alliance—that this appears to be the case on the comparative view of the campaign. But what was our situation, on the whole, of the war? The loss of Holland—the deposition of the Stadtholder—the acquisition to France of the Belgic provinces, and a great part of Germany, accompanied with immense losses of men, and an increase of debt exceeding 100,000,000*l*. Having considered the minister's ill success, he begged to contemplate the powers which were wasted on him. Father of Mercy! what were they at the opening of the war? And first:—All Europe, various in her views and various in her exertions—but there she was with immense armies in perfect discipline, pouring on a single country in a state of complete anarchy—there was beside the special exertion of the British empire: Parliament unbounded in its grants, unlimited in its confidence, and as patient as it was profuse, bringing alternately to the Throne—Loan in one hand, and Liberty in the other. There was the city of London, with her Amalthean Horn—there was the landed interest, with its fears; and the commercial interest, with its confi-

dence—there was the aristocracy, with whatever it possessed of inert property and inert talent. Loans, votes of credit, anticipations, indemnity following anticipations, and following every encroachment on law, where Parliament had omitted to legalize by anticipation, encroachment on liberty—that was everything, except the enthusiasm of a military country. There was also Ireland—poor, plundered, ill-used, insulted, and forgiving Ireland—and though represented by the minions easily raised and easily put down, pouring into the fleets and armies until she was forced to leave herself without a soldier for her ministers' ill-fated and wide-wasting West India expedition, where those ministers, by their plan and their delay, supplied the place of plague, pestilence, and famine." * * * *

Referring to the case of the Catholics, he said—

"They scolded the people from the bar of the House of Commons—they had kicked their prayers after them; they had instructed Grand Juries to publish denunciations against the Catholics—they had then taken up the Catholics—they had then resumed the Protestant ascendancy—again they had taken up the Catholics, and again they had let them down—encouraging and maturing by alternate hope and apprehension, the zeal of the distinct sects—the blockhead's sense and the Court's deistical devotion, to unite under the crazy colours of religious war and carnage—they had in the progress of their defeat promised a change of ministers and measures—they get a great supply—recal the minister for making the promises under their own authority, and tell the Catholics, whom they had deceived, that they must for ever remain disqualified for seats in Parliament, and offices in the State, for the better securing the Crown and the connection—the people petition—they had answered their grants by disappointment—they then answered their petitions by fencibles; the army they had withdrawn when the French had threatened the country—and they pour it in when the people petition the Crown. The leading Catholics who had assisted in planning the petition to His Majesty, they had prosecuted, without colour or pretence, for high treason—the lower orders of the Catholics they give up to an armed mob, to be exterminated with violence—triumphant in a course of years, and put them out of the

protection of the law: they do this, when by their misconduct abroad, they had reason to apprehend invasion at home, and when they had so reduced the army, that they had left His Majesty's Government no chance for its safety, but in what, I imagine, now must be its best security—the unanimity of his people. If ever this country is lost to England, depend on it this system will be the cause. * * * * This country can only be saved by her own force, and her own force can only be procured by adopting the Catholics, and they can only be adopted by a total and entire change of maxims, measures, and manners, accompanied with a free and full participation of whatever privileges the constitution can boast, and what is infinitely more essential, whatever privileges the constitution intended. This is the force, the power, the charm, the staff of your Saint, that will banish from your isle all noxious animals; the wand that opens the sea to the English, and will wall it up against the French. Quick—very quick—you have not a moment to lose—you have given your fellow-subjects a share of your taxes, your defeats, and depopulation, kindly, very kindly—give them now a share of your blessings, whatever your ministers have left you. Let us make no more sacrifices of our liberties—let us now sacrifice our prejudices—they will ascend in *incense*, the best use you can make of them—and be a tiding to your God, that you are become a convert to your country."

The high-church party, during the debate, had congratulated themselves that Mr. Grattan was now at the close of his political life; to which he replied—

"He was told that he was at the close of his political life. He would borrow a few moments of that life to repeat the sentiment, and re-assert a claim dear to his heart, however reduced our number, however solitary our phalanx. It had been objected, that the Catholic claim should not have been made the amendment of an address. To such an objection it was necessary to reply very little—claims of right, liberties, and franchises, redress of grievances, and removal of abuses, did naturally belong to, and where Parliaments did their duty, were inseparable from addresses, prodigal and abundant with the offers of lives and fortunes; that to

the address under their consideration, such claim did more particularly belong, because it contained a new and further offer of life, in the enrolment of corps, which, if exclusive, were wicked, and if inclusive, unless freedom should accompany arms, were hazardous; that it was particularly becoming in those who were connected with Lord Fitzwilliam's administration to make the amendment, because the plan of Catholic emancipation was a part of their plan of county armament; and lastly, it was peculiarly seasonable now to advance the claim of the Catholic to sit in Parliament, as we are on the eve of a general election, and the loss of this session is to the Catholic the loss of nine years: that he did allow, that precedents where the rights and franchises of the subject were made any part of an address to the Crown, were of late years few indeed; that addresses of late were unconditional surrender, and unqualified submission to every Minister, to any Minister, and to all Ministers; that, however, in the perilous moments of the State there were precedents in favour of the people, and accordingly, in 1793, the Throne came a little nearer the condition of the people, and the speech, in extremes, recommended measures of reconciliation; nor should I have been surprised had the speech of this session done the same; if the changes of war were not to the minister of these countries, the change of sentiment, but that now, instead of reconciliation, gentlemen called for unanimity without it, that is, for a Parliamentary unanimity, instead of a national one; that there might be, and he had often been a witness to two unanimities, namely, an unanimity in Parliament for loans—for taxes—for penal laws—for rejection of petitions—and for the unqualified surrender of the life, fortunes, and liberty of the subject;—but at the same time without doors an unanimity against those measures—unanimity for privileges—for emancipation—and for reformation; that is to say, unanimity within doors for the Minister, and without doors unanimity against him; frightful unanimities these, founded on one side in folly, in fear, in influence, in the little motive, and the puny gratification, in influences visible and invisible—founded on the other side in wounded pride, public principle, and public indignation, and which connected with the other, left the minister too strong for the nation, and too weak for the enemy.

Referring to the imprudent declaration of Mr.

Pelham (then Secretary, afterwards Lord Chichester), he observed:

"If there was a language that could be called invitation* —if it were possible for an Irish member of Parliament to invite invasion—if it were possible for a member of this House to give encouragement in France beyond all example or imitation—there was the member who had done it—the Right Hon. Gentleman, the Lord Lieutenant's Secretary, the representative of the English Cabinet in Ireland, who had spoken as follows: 'The exclusion of Catholics from Parliament and the State, is necessary for the Crown and the connexion—that he is ready to meet the question now —that he was ready to support it with life and fortune.' This dreadful, this deadly, this wild, and this fatal proscription, when he is calling for volunteers to enrol in the service, what language, what denunciation, what dictation could France have suggested more opportune in time, more pregnant in disaffection, or more authoritative in mischief? —his practical logic has been, that in time of apprehended invasion it is perilous to hold the language of reconciliation, and discreet to hold the language of proscription—eternal and indefeasible proscription! denounced by a minister of the Crown, speaking to three-fourths of his Majesty's subjects. France knew perfectly well that she had gained Brabant, but she did not know till now that she had gained in the councils of the King of England—that fatal partizan, who, with the best intention in the world, could thus in his Majesty's dominions, and from his seat in Parliament, recruit for the French republic: the Member may rely on it, the Catholic—the Irish will not long submit to such an interdict; they will not suffer a stranger (amiable as the Right Hon. Member may be, he is but a stranger) to tell us on what proud terms English Government will consent to rule in Ireland, still less to pronounce and dictate the incapacity of the natives, as the terms of her dominion, and the base condition of our connection and allegiance. We love the monarchy, and we love the connexion, as compatible with, and instrumental to the preservation of Irish liberties—preferring our own liberties and our people

* Mr. Grattan's foresight here appears remarkable; for Theobald Wolfe Tone actually used the debates and speeches of the Government party, with the French Executive Directory, as an inducement to invade the country, and a proof of probable success.

of all religions, to all things, and to all other countries. Rely on it, the Ministry must retract that denunciation; I will hazard my credit that they shall retract that denunciation; they have not the madness—they have not the audacity—they have not the power to abide by it. I would appeal to their own country against them, and implore that her dearest interest, and next to herself, her lost strength, the physical force of Ireland, may not be lost to Great Britain by such abominable, unauthorized, senseless, and diabolic proscription. How much safer our plan of opposition, as you call it, our amendment of conciliation, the only principle of peace and of strength; with it you need not tremble at the sword of France, nor the pen of Paine—without it you will become a prey to any enemy—you will require to use the words of Lord Bolingbroke—neither the valour of an Achilles, nor the wisdom of a Nestor, nor the eloquence of an Ulysses to undo you; Thersites himself will be sufficient for the purpose."

The studied silence of Government as to the excesses of the Orangemen in Armagh, was deserving of just condemnation; and on that Mr. Grattan said:

"He could not sit down without expressing how little satisfied he was with the excuses advanced for neglecting the religious war of Armagh; he said Government had not exerted all the powers which the laws gave it;—had Government dismissed any of the magistrates? Will Government say they had no ground for so doing? Will Government say that in a year and a half, with 40,000 soldiers, and with summary laws, that would have enabled them to pull down the liberties of the whole island, that they could not reduce that county to order? I cannot but think the audacity of the mob arose from a confidence in the connivance of Government; under an administration sent here to defeat a Catholic bill, a Protestant mob very naturally conceives itself a part of the State, and exercises the power of life and death, and transportation, and murder, and rape, with triumph, and with the seeming sympathy of the court religion, the magistrates retire from the scene of action, except such as secretly foment, or openly encourage—the Government at last comes forward, recites and classes all the outrages of the country, that outrage only

excepted—the prudent mover of certain resolutions confines himself merely to those murders which are unpopular at the Castle, and provides such remedies as have nothing to say to the North—the clause of compensation which promised some relief, is proposed and rejected, and at the end of seven months, are we surprised to find in such a Government, that the violence which afflicts the Catholic has been suffered to continue? Protection and proscription are incompatible; the Government that proscribes their privilege will not protect their person."

Mr. Fletcher, that able and constitutional lawyer, whose independent character and conduct, whether at the bar, in the senate, or on the bench, deserved and received the admiration of every lover of freedom, made great and spirited efforts in this debate in favour of the people. Curran, too, exerted himself, but in vain; his conclusion was as follows:

"A gentleman had said, the Catholics had got much, and they ought to be content. Why have they got that much?—was it from the minister?—was it from the Parliament, which threw their petition over its bar? No, (said he,) they got it by the great revolution of human affairs—by the astonishing march of the human mind—a march that has collected too much moment in its advance to be now stopped in its progress. The bark is still afloat—it is freighted with the hopes and liberties of millions of men—she is already under way—the rower may faint, or the wind may sleep;—but rely upon it, she has already acquired an energy of advancement, that will support her course and bring her to her destination—rely upon it, whether much or little remains, it is now vain to withhold it—rely upon it, you may as well stamp your foot upon the earth, in order to prevent its revolution; you could not stop it, you would only remain a silly gnomon upon its surface, to measure the rapidity of rotation, until you were forced round and buried in the shade of that body, whose irresistible course you would endeavour to oppose."

The day after the debate, the Attorney-general (Wolfe), moved the suspension of the Habeas Cor-

pus Act, which was carried, notwithstanding a strong opposition from Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Fletcher, and the small band that still remained attached to the liberties of their country. The numbers were 157 to 7!!

On the 17th, Mr. Grattan made a further attempt in favour of the Catholics, and proposed the following resolution:

"That the admissibility of persons professing the Catholic religion to vote in Parliament is consistent with the safety of the Crown, and the connection of Ireland with Great Britain."

Equitable and just as this appeared—harmless and simple as it certainly was, yet it was termed a "*wicked, dangerous, and seditious* proposition," and was rejected by 143 to 19. Here vanished the hopes of the Catholics, and the tranquillity of the country. Mr. Grattan exclaimed that he could not go along with the Attorney-general.

"*I know not where you are leading me—from one strong bill to another—until I see a gulf before me, at whose abyss I recoil.* In it I see no safety—nothing but the absence of our dearest rights—the absence of the Habeas Corpus Act—the absence of civil liberty. Government have made it a question of passion as well as of power. Do you imagine there is any man who would prefer the wild schemes of republicanism to the sober blessings of the English constitution, if he enjoyed them? What is the tree of Liberty? It is sprinkled with the blood of kings and of nobles—some of the best blood of Europe; but if you force your fellow-subjects from under the hospitable roof of the constitution, you will leave them, like the weary traveller, at length to repose under the dreadful tree of liberty. Give them therefore a safe dwelling—the good old fabric of the constitution, with its doors open to the community."

This eloquence and reasoning was in vain. The mandate of the minister had been issued. No concessions were to be made—no terms were to be kept with the people—"*vigour beyond the law*"

(such was the expression), was the substitute for justice. Accordingly, Mr. Curran's motion on the 7th of November, to enquire into the outrages committed on the Catholics in the county of Armagh was rejected. Parliament soon after adjourned to the ensuing year; and the nation that only two years before, in the time of Lord Westmoreland, was in such a state of safety as to be left with only 7,000 troops, was now considered so insecure, with upwards of 80,000 regulars and militia, that Government found it necessary to arm the gentry and the *chosen men* of the community to guard against domestic disturbance and foreign invasion. They passed an act of Parliament to embody the yeomanry—a force that soon became exclusive in its character, imbued with party and religious prejudices, and proved to be, in some cases, the Scourge of the people.

Thus was established the domination of the favoured sect; and thus, embittered by local feuds, sharpened by resentment and revenge, under the abused term 'Loyalty,' the ferocious spirit of faction, which in every age and clime has committed the most frightful excesses, was now erected into a horrid, a frantic, and a sanguinary despotism.

CHAPTER IX.

Wolfe Tone goes from America to France—Urges the invasion of Ireland — French forces—their failure — Letter to Mr. Grattan, and despatch of Lord Lieutenant as to loyalty of Catholics—Measures in Irish Parliament—Military proceedings in 1797—Imprisonments—Arthur O'Connor arrested—General Lake's proclamation—North of Ireland under military law — Mr. Grattan's motion negatived — Excesses of the soldiery—Mr. Fox's motion in British Parliament for lenient measures towards Ireland—Dr. Duigenan's motion against Mr. Fox—Arrest of United Irishmen at Belfast—Report of Secret Committee, May, 1797—Number, arms, finances, and plan of Society —Its originators described by Dr. M'Nevin—Trial of United Irishmen—Curran's speech — Mr. Ponsonby's motion for reform and emancipation—The Opposition Members secede—Feeling in England and Ireland as to Mr. Pitt—Meetings and resolutions of the Irish in defence of their rights—The Lord Lieutenant and the soldiery stop them—Mr. Grattan declines to set up at the general election—Addresses his constituents—They resolve not to attend the hustings —He retires from the yeomanry—Goes to Castleconnell for his health —His letter to his fellow-citizens—Lord Clare attacks Lord Aldborough and the leaders of the Opposition—Mr. Grattan defends them—Mr. Pitt disapproves of Lord Clare's conduct—Letter of Dr. Haliday to Lord Camden—Mr. Fox and the Bishop of Waterford to Mr. Grattan—His reply—Letters to Mr. Monck, Mr. M'Can, and the Reverend Mr. Berwick.

On the Continent of Europe, Mr. Pitt's coalition had failed; the allies were again unsuccessful. The star of Buonaparte rose in Italy. Spain declared against England. The violent proceedings of the Irish Government, together with French intrigue, led to the invasion of Ireland. Early in February, 1796, Theobald Wolfe Tone (not however deputed by the United Irishmen), landed in France from America.* He introduced himself to the French authorities. The members of the

* Mr. Peter Burrowes, who well knew all the parties at that period, often assured me, that when Tone read in America the statements that Lord Clare made in his speeches as to Ireland, he took them with him, and immediately set off from the United States to Paris. "*They were his credentials.*"

Executive Directory,—Carnot, the minister, and Clarke, the head of the war department,—and urged them to invade his country; representing the people as willing to join the French,—grounding his chief and first reliance on the Dissenters of the North, on account of their republican principles; next, on the Catholic peasantry, on account of their ill treatment by Government; last and least, on the Catholic clergy, *whose neutrality he told General Hoche, might be secured* if they avoided shocking their prejudices. He strove to substantiate the accuracy of his statements and opinions by referring to the acts of the Irish Government, the debates in the Irish Parliament, and the speeches of Lord Clare; and when doubts were thrown upon his assertions, as to the feelings and disposition of the Irish, he quoted them as evidence of his veracity; adding that they were most likely to be true, as coming from an enemy who would have concealed the facts if he was able, being admissions of the weakness and dangers of the country. Tone thus convinced the Directory that they would have the Presbyterians; and Lord Clare's speeches convinced them that they would have the Catholics; so that the Lord Chancellor, by his violent acts, and extravagant charges against the people, was mainly instrumental in aiding the enemy in the invasion of his country.

It was not till late in the year that the plan was arranged, nor until the 15th of December that the expedition sailed from Brest; so that its destination was well known. It was under the command of General Hoche, and consisted of seventeen sail of the line, thirteen frigates, and seven corvettes, making, with transports, forty-three sail, having on board 15,975 soldiers, 41,160 stand of arms, twenty pieces of artillery, nine

pieces for siege, 61,200 barrels of powder, 7,000,000 of ball cartridges, and 700,000 flints.

Tone had urged very strongly that they should land in the North; but the orders were to proceed to the South; if separated to cruize off Mizen Head for five days, then go to the Shannon for three more, and if dispersed to return to Brest. On the 22nd they came off Bantry Bay, with twenty-five sail; on the 23rd they separated in a violent storm;—sixteen remained in Bantry Bay, twenty were driven to sea;* the Seduisant, with 550 soldiers, was lost the first night after leaving Brest. Hoche, who was on board the Fraternité, was separated from the fleet, and never appeared. Tone, who had got a commission in the French service, was in the Indomptable, of eighty guns: he urged Grouchy, the second in command, to land. A council of war was held on the 27th, when it appeared that their force was reduced to 4,168 men, two four-pounders, 1,500,000 cartridges, 500 rounds for the artillery, and 500 pounds of powder,—without a guinea, a tent, or a horse,—*and the province in which they were to land was the only one of the four which had testified no disposition to revolt!*— Such is the account that Tone gave. The council naturally decided against landing; and on the 29th, the remains of the fleet returned to Brest. Thus was Ireland (whose security the Minister had neglected) saved by Providence from a most sanguinary war; and here for the present terminated the efforts of Wolfe Tone's intrigues with

* The Generals were Hoche, *Grouchy*, Harty, Simon, Humbert, Chaseloup, Cherin. It is singular that on two occasions Grouchy should have had almost in his hand the destinies of England, and providentially not to have turned them against her; in the present instance, when he waited for his commander who did not arrive, and he declined to land; and at Waterloo, where his commander waited for him, and he did not appear.

France, and the effects of Lord Clare's invectives against Ireland.

Mr. Tone's work on this, and other subjects, is amusing, lively, and spirited. He writes unfriendly to the Whigs and Mr. Grattan,—probably because Mr. Ponsonby had refused to trust him, and Mr. Grattan to recommend him when Lord Fitzwilliam was Viceroy. His diary affords a useful lesson to unquiet and discontented minds, and teaches man to adopt every alternative rather than take up arms against his country. He frequently exclaimed, in the bitterness of anguish, despair, and regret,—"I wish our Revolution were ended, and I quietly set down in the bosom of my family." On one occasion, when he began to suspect the fidelity of the individual with whom he was negotiating, he breaks out—"*Have I risked my life, ruined my prospects, left my family, and deserted my country* to be baffled by a scoundrel?" On returning to Brest, after the failure of the expedition, he gives way to the keenest emotions:—"I am now a Frenchman, and must regulate my future plans accordingly. I hope the Directory will not dismiss me the service for this unhappy failure—in which, certainly, I have personally nothing to reproach myself with; and in that case I shall be rich enough to live as a peasant. If God Almighty sends me my dearest love and my darling babies in safety, *I will buy or rent a spot, and have done with the world for ever.* I shall never be great, or famous, or powerful, *but I may be happy!!*"

Alas! how many victims like him did not Mr. Pitt and Lord Clare make! How many unfortunate men did they not drive from their happy homes, and peaceful families! How great the calamities that resulted from Lord Fitzwilliam's

recall, which these ministers entailed upon the country.

The allusion made to this individual by a very distinguished person, Charles Bushe* (Chief Justice of Ireland) may here be introduced. On opposing Mr. Ponsonby's motion in 1797, to repeal the Insurrection Act, he spoke of Wolfe Tone. "That unhappy man now wastes upon the desert air of an American plantation, the brightest talents that I ever knew man to be gifted with. I shall never speak or think of him with acrimony or severity. I knew him from early infancy, as the friend of my youth, and the companion of my studies; and while I bear testimony to the greatness of his abilities, I shall also say of him, that he had a heart which nothing but the accursed spirit of perverted politics could mislead or deprave; and I shall ever lament his fate with compassion for his errors, admiration for his talents, and abhorrence for his political opinions."

Nothing could exceed the spirit of the yeomanry, who, from all quarters, volunteered their services, and marched to oppose the French. The only difficulty the Government found was to restrain their ardour. With respect to the peasantry, they were zealous in support of the troops. The Colonel† of the Wicklow Militia often told me how nobly they behaved,—clearing away the snow,—harnessing themselves to the guns, and drawing them through the difficult passes, they supplied the soldiers with bread, beer, and provisions, at their own expense.

The following letter, from an eye witness, is inserted to show the feeling which animated them; yet these were the Catholics whom Lord Clare

* This able and talented individual has just retired from the bench, and is succeeded by Mr. Pennefather.

† The late Colonel Howard.

had stated, in his place in Parliament, would never be attached to England, or loyal to a Protestant Prince :—

MR. JOHN THERRY TO MR. GRATTAN.

Cork, Wednesday, 6th January, 1797.

DEAR SIR,—You have no doubt heard of the alarming and critical state which the South of Ireland has been in for the last ten days; and so contradictory and unsatisfactory, though always alarming, were the reports which were constantly in circulation, that no man could rely upon anything he heard;—for example, a letter had been received by our Committee at three o'clock yesterday afternoon, from General Coote, from Dunmanway, stating that the French fleet had sailed from Bantry Bay. At seven o'clock General Stewart writes to the Mayor that General Coote has had information, and that the French ships had not sailed. Mr. Sullivan, who first gave information of the arrival of the French fleet off our coast, arrived here this morning from Bantry, which he left at eleven o'clock yesterday, and gave the following intelligence to the Committee :—

On Sunday last, from Bear Haven, he saw thirteen ships, some of them very large, lying at anchor off Bear Island, besides seven other vessels at anchor higher up the bay, near Whiddy Island. On Monday, in consequence of a signal made, he saw five of the seven ships off Whiddy set sail to join the thirteen lying off Bear Island. Yesterday morning, he ascended the high ground behind the town of Bantry, and saw but the two vessels which had been left near Whiddy. They appeared to him to be of seventy-four guns each, one without a bowsprit, the other had lost her main-topmast, and he believed they were unable to put to sea. The French who landed on Whiddy were in good health, and after walking about and shooting a few hares, for which the island is remarkable, embarked again, taking with them Mr. White's steward, who happens to be a remarkably good pilot.

Nothing can exceed the zeal and good conduct of all descriptions of people in this part of the country, and I hope it will be considered as it deserves.

I have the honour to be, dear Sir, wishing you many happy returns of the season, your most obedient humble servant, JOHN THERRY.

The following despatch from the Lord Lieutenant still further confirmed the statement as to the excellent disposition of the people of the South of Ireland, and was a complete refutation of the calumnies uttered against the Catholics.

LORD CAMDEN TO THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

Castle, January 10, 1797.

I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Grace, that since the information transmitted to Mr. Greville, that the French had entirely left Bantry Bay, there has been no re-appearance of them upon the coasts; so that I trust, from the violence of the tempest, and from their ships being ill-found and ill-victualled, their expedition is for the present frustrated.

Upon reviewing what has passed in this expedition of the enemy, I have the satisfaction to reflect, that the best spirit was manifested by his Majesty's regular and militia forces; and I have every reason to believe, that if a landing had taken place, they would have displayed the utmost fidelity. When the flank companies of the Antrim regiment were formed, the whole regiment turned out to a man, with expressions of the greatest eagerness to march; and the Downshire regiment, to a man, declared they would stand and fall by their officers.

At the time the army was ordered to march, the weather was extremely severe; I therefore ordered them a proportion of spirits upon their route, and directed an allowance of fourpence a-day to their wives until their return. *During their march the utmost attention was paid them by the inhabitants of the towns and villages through which they passed; so that in many places the meat provided by the Commissary was not consumed. The roads, which had in parts been rendered impassable by the snow, were cleared by the peasantry. The poor people often shared their potatoes with them, and dressed their meat without demanding payment; of which there was a very particular instance in the town of Banagher, where no gentleman or principal farmer resides to set them the example.* At Carlow a considerable subscription was made for the troops as they passed; and at Limerick and Cork every exertion was used to facilitate the carriage of artillery and baggage, by premiums to the carmen; and in the town of Galway, which for a short time was left

with a very inadequate garrison, the zeal and ardour of the inhabitants and yeomanry was peculiarly manifested, and in a manner to give me the utmost satisfaction. *In short, the general good disposition of the people through the South and West was so prevalent, that had the enemy landed, their hope of assistance from the inhabitants would have been totally disappointed.*

From the armed yeomanry, Government derived the most honourable assistance. Noblemen and gentlemen of the first property vied in exerting themselves at the head of their corps. Much of the express and escort duty was performed by them. In Cork, Limerick, and Galway, they took the duty of the garrison. Lord Shannon informs me, that men of 3,000*l.* and 4,000*l.* a-year were employed in escorting baggage and carrying expresses.

Mr. John Latouche, who was a private in his son's corps, rode twenty-five miles in one of the severest nights, on express, it being his turn for duty. The merchants of Dublin, many of them of the first eminence, marched sixteen miles with a convoy of arms to the North, whither it was conducted by reliefs of yeomanry. The appearance in this metropolis has been highly meritorious. The corps have been formed of the most respectable barristers, attornies, merchants, gentlemen, and citizens, and their number is so considerable, and their zeal in mounting guard so useful, that I was enabled greatly to reduce the garrison with perfect safety to the town. The numbers of yeomanry fully appointed and disciplined in Dublin exceed two thousand, above four hundred of whom are horse. The whole number of corps approved by Government amounted to four hundred and forty, exclusive of the Dublin corps. The gross number is nearly twenty-five thousand. There are also ninety-one offers of service under consideration, and one hundred and twenty-five proposals have been declined; and, in reply to a circular letter written to the commandants of the respective corps, their answers almost universally contained a general offer of service in any part of the kingdom.

Many prominent examples of individual loyalty and spirit have appeared. A useful impression was made upon the minds of the lower Catholics by a judicious address from Dr. Moylan, the titular Bishop of Cork. I cannot but take notice of the exertions of Lord Kenmare, who spared no expence in giving assistance to the commanding

officer in his neighbourhood, and who took into his own demesne a great quantity of cattle which had been driven from the coast. Nor could anything exceed the ardour of the Earl of Ormond, who, when his regiment of militia was retained as part of the garrison of Dublin, solicited with so much zeal a command in the flank companies, that I thought it a measure due to his Majesty's service to encourage his Lordship's request. CAMDEN.

Such was the spirited conduct and loyal disposition evinced by the people in the south of Ireland, when the enemy threatened a descent on their shores. They naturally expected, and certainly desired some recompense, but they received none. Their rights were still withheld; and the French having departed, and the terror of invasion being removed, the minister gave to the people merely the empty tribute of extorted praise, and the Catholics in the south of Ireland remained disqualified, but loyal, while the hitherto favoured north was still discontented and disaffected. Parliament assembled in January, but no relief was held out from that quarter: the declaration of war by Spain—the recall of Lord Malmesbury from Paris—and congratulations on the failure of the French expedition, formed the subject of Lord Camden's speech. Mr. Grattan proposed an amendment to the address, "That the House would consider it their duty to take into immediate consideration the steps that had been taken by the ministers for the defence of the country." He contended that the British Minister should have been more vigilant, and sent the British fleet to protect the coast; that the object of the expedition had been known long before it sailed; that the country had been neglected in a similar manner in 1779, and left to defend herself; and when it was considered how much Ireland, by her purse and her people, contributed to the defence of the

navy and the empire, the Minister was infinitely more culpable. All men exclaimed against his conduct when they beheld him deaf to her entreaties —lost to all concern for the safety of Ireland— leaving her a prey to her distractions, and to be defended by her own valour. The conduct of the Catholics was exemplary, and was an answer to all the charges made against them; that Parliament would be much to blame if they were ever prompt to adulate and never to censure. Mr. Ponsonby took the same view of affairs, and hoped that the zeal and energy displayed by the people had at length opened the eyes of the Government, and that their best course would be to secure by mildness the good feelings of the people, instead of goading them into acts of violence by unconstitutional measures; the Roman Catholics had proved their loyalty and their just title to be admitted to the privileges of the Constitution.

The numbers on the division were 7 to 90 against Mr. Grattan's proposition. On the failure of this motion, Sir L. Parsons, on the 24th of February, proposed to raise 50,000 yeomen, but he had only 23 to support him against 125. On the 27th, Mr. George Ponsonby proposed a vote of censure on Ministers for their neglect of the defence of the country, on the last threatened invasion, but it was rejected without a division. Mr. Vandeleur proposed an Absentee tax of two shillings in the pound on all rents of persons absent more than six months: this was supported by Mr. Grattan, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Curran, but was defeated by 122 to 49.

Such were the civic measures that engaged the attention of the House in the early part of the session of 1797; the close of it was occupied by others of a different character, and which quickly changed for the worse the aspect of affairs. The

Habeas Corpus Act having been suspended,* and the Constitution being suppressed, Government seemed to think it an easy task to deal with the people. Accordingly, troops of the line, and fencible regiments from England, were poured into the country in great numbers. A multitude of persons were arrested for political offences; some by warrants from magistrates, and military officers made magistrates; others from privy councillors, judges, secretaries; even by the Lord Lieutenant's sign manual; and last, not least, from Lord Castlereagh, who by this time had cast aside his Reform principles, and appeared in his real colours. Many were taken up merely on suspicion,† were lodged in gaol, and bail refused; several were tried‡ at the assizes, and being acquitted, were immediately arrested on charges of high treason

* In February, 1797, the military broke into the house of the proprietor of the *Northern Star* newspaper at Belfast, destroyed the types and presses, and lodged the printers in gaol. Messrs. Robert and William Simms were arrested for having published Arthur O'Connor's address to the electors of the county of Antrim, and left in prison for four months. Arthur O'Connor was apprehended on the 2nd of February by order of the Privy Council for his second address to the county of Antrim, and lodged in the tower in Dublin Castle for six months. Looking through the prison bars, the sentries of the Highland fencibles fired at him, but without success. His address was an able composition, and stated some hard truths; but though injudicious, would scarcely warrant the attempt to murder!

† In Belfast, a man with a mask or black crape over his face, was led out attended by the military, and when he marked out any individuals, they were seized and cast into prison. This man's name was supposed to be Newell, a spy of Government. In a few days forty persons were arrested.

‡ The chief trial for administering the test of the United Irish, took place in April, in Armagh, in the case of Dogherty; the witness against him was a soldier, who perjured himself so glaringly, that he was transferred to the dock for trial, and the prisoner acquitted. The next case occurred at Monaghan, when the prisoner Hanlon was sworn against by a soldier of the 24th Dragoons, but he broke down on cross-examination, and his evidence was disproved, and Hanlon acquitted. The system of procuring testimony by spies and informers, was carried by the Government supporters to a frightful extreme, and the circumstance of the military being connected with these trials raised a strong feeling against them, and was productive of great injury.

and sedition, and again incarcerated; spies and informers were encouraged, fostered, and protected by Government; they quickly multiplied, and established every where a *reign of terror*. The prisons overflowed, guard-houses and barracks were converted into gaols.* The people, however, were not quieted; discontent and outrage still continued; arrest and incarceration on one side,—riot, disorder, and excess of all sorts on the other. Mr. Pitt's Government had passed a convention Act, a Riot Act, an Arms Act, a Gunpowder Act, an Insurrection Act, an Indemnity Act, and a Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; they imprisoned without bail, and transported without trial, and indemnified without compensation, and yet they found these numerous, various, and excessive powers were unavailing: disorder and discontent not only continued, but increased.†

At length, finding themselves incapable of securing the affections of the people, unwilling to remedy their grievances, and unable to controul their excesses, they determined to solve the difficulty by the sword, and place the whole North of Ireland under military government. On the 3d March, 1797, Mr. Pelham, the Secretary, wrote to General Lake, who commanded in the Province of Ulster, stating that, as in the counties of Down,

* Several arrested by General Lake and Colonel Barber under a warrant from the Lord Lieutenant, were imprisoned in the artillery barracks in Belfast, and after a long confinement, brought up by Habeas Corpus to the King's Bench in November 1797. The case of Thomas Huson and twelve others was argued; the court decided that their imprisonment was illegal—that they did not come within the law suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, and that as the charge of treasonable practices was a bailable offence, they should be released and bound to appear at the assizes. Messrs. Emmett and Sampson were counsel for the prisoners. Thus, numbers of persons were for months illegally deprived of their liberty, and this under the warrant and sign manual of the Lord Lieutenant.

† Emmett, in his Evidence, says, that the first communication the United Irishmen had with France was not till after the Insurrection and Indemnity Acts had passed.—*Pieces of Irish History*, p. 215.

Antrim, Derry, Donegal, and Tyrone, secret associations existed, and great outrages had been committed, he should dispose of his men so as to deprive all persons of their arms, and to disperse all assemblies, that were not in arms, *without waiting for the civil authority*, and should stop all persons travelling the high ways at night. In consequence, on the 13th March, General Lake issued his proclamation, whereby he placed the people without the pale of the law.*

Mr. Grattan immediately called the attention of

* By order of the Officer commanding the Northern District.

Belfast, March 13, 1797.

Whereas the daring and horrid outrage in many parts of this province, evidently perpetrated with a view to supersede the laws and the administration of justice, by an organized system of murder and robbery, have increased to such an alarming degree, as from their atrocity and extent to bid defiance to the civil power, and to endanger the lives and properties of his Majesty's faithful subjects. And whereas the better to effect their traitorous purposes, several persons who have been enrolled under the authority of his Majesty's commission, and others have been forcibly and traitorously deprived of their arms; it is therefore become indispensably necessary for the safety and protection of the well disposed, *to interpose the king's troops under my command:* and I do *hereby give notice that I have received authority and directions to act in such manner as the public safety may require.* I do therefore hereby enjoin and require all persons in this district (peace-officers and those serving in a military capacity excepted) forthwith to bring in and surrender up all arms and ammunition which they may have in their possession, to the officer commanding the king's troops in their neighbourhood.

I trust that an immediate compliance with this order may render any act of mine to enforce it unnecessary.

Let the people seriously reflect before it is too late, on the ruin into which they are rushing; let them reflect upon their present prosperity, and the miseries in which they will inevitably be involved by persisting in acts of positive rebellion; let them instantly, by surrendering up their arms, and by restoring those traitorously taken from the king's forces, *rescue themselves from the severity of military authority.* Let all the loyal and well-intentioned act together with energy and spirit, in enforcing subordination to the laws, and restoring tranquillity in their respective neighbourhoods, and they may be assured of protection and support from me.

And I do hereby invite all persons who are enabled to give information touching arms or ammunition which may be concealed, immediately to communicate the same to the several officers commanding his majesty's forces in their respective districts; and for their encouragement and reward, I do hereby promise and engage that strict and inviolate secrecy shall be observed with respect to all persons who shall make such communication; and that every person who shall make it

the House to the subject, and asked if this proclamation was issued by order of the Government. The Secretary, Mr. Pelham, declined to avow it. Mr. Grattan gave notice he would next day move for a copy of it. The ministers absented themselves from the House; but on the 18th the Lord Lieutenant sent down a message,* stating he had authorized this measure.

shall receive as a reward, the full value of all such arms and ammunition as shall be seized in consequence thereof.

(Signed by) G. LAKE, Lieut. Gen.
Commanding the Northern District.

* Mr. Pelham delivered the following Message from His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant:

"CAMDEN.

"The dangerous and the daring outrages committed in many parts of the Province of Ulster, evidently perpetrated with a view to supersede the law, and prevent the administration of justice by an organized system of murder and robbery, have lately increased to so alarming a degree in some parts of that province, as to bid defiance to the exertions of the civil power, and to endanger the lives and properties of his majesty's subjects in that part of the kingdom.

"These outrages are encouraged and supported by treasonable associations to overturn our happy constitution.

"Threats have been held out against the lives of all persons who shall venture to discover such their treasonable intentions. The frequent treasonable assemblage of persons, and their proceeding by threats and force to disarm the peaceable inhabitants, their endeavour to collect great quantities of arms in obscure hiding-places, their assembling by night to exercise the practice of arms, their intimidations, accompanied by the most horrid murders, to prevent his majesty's faithful subjects from joining the yeomanry corps established by law, their having fired on some of his majesty's justices of the peace, and threatened with murder any who should have the spirit to stand forth in support of the laws, which threats have been recently exemplified, their attacks on the military, by firing on them in the execution of their duty, have so totally bid defiance to the ordinary exertions of civil power, that I found myself obliged by every tie of duty to his majesty, and of regard to the welfare of his faithful subjects, to provide for the public safety by the most effectual and immediate application of the military force entrusted to me.

"I have accordingly ordered the General commanding in that province, to dispose of and employ those troops under his command, with the assistance and co-operation of the Yeomanry, to suppress these outrages, and by seizing upon all arms and ammunition, to recover such as had been traitorously taken from his majesty's troops and others, and more effectually to defeat the evil designs of those who had endangered the public safety.

"I have the satisfaction of informing you that by the firm and temperate conduct of the General, and the troops under him, and the zealous

On the 20th, it was taken into consideration. Mr. Grattan remonstrated with the Minister for placing an entire province under military execution without inquiry. The people were attainted on the charge of Government without proof. The dissatisfaction, he conceived, had been occasioned by the acts of the Minister, and the same system would continue it. The order of the Government was illegal; it was an invitation for the French, almost a preparation to receive them; irreconcileable with the genius of a free people, and more likely to give spirit to France, than subdue the spirit of Ireland. It was an admission that the strong measures had not succeeded, and that military law must be resorted to. "*The system, however, would fail if the people did not suffer themselves to be provoked into violence; a partial insurrection was the only thing that would uphold it.*" He concluded a most animated and able expostulation with the Government, by moving an amendment expressing their regret "that the Lord Lieutenant should have been advised to issue an order contrary to the law of the land, and the principles of the Constitution, which could not be enforced without violating every thing that was dear to a free people, and without the introduction of military government and military execution, and entreating him to recall the same."

The law officers of the Crown, Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Toler, admitted that the proceeding was illegal, but justified it on the ground that the people were almost in a state of insurrection. Mr. John Claudius Beresford said *he wished they were in open*

co-operation of the Yeomanry Corps, a very considerable number of arms has been taken; and I am encouraged to hope that a continuance of the same vigorous measures will give confidence to the well-disposed, and restore to the civil power its constitutional authority, which it has ever been my wish, and shall be my strenuous endeavour to support with energy and effect. "C."

rebellion, to meet them face to face! Such was the spirit of the times, that these words passed unreprehended by the House. It was in vain to reason with a body of men actuated by feelings such as these: the order of the day was to denounce every man as disloyal, and stigmatize him as a traitor, if he dared to oppose the measures of Government, or suggest those of leniency; yet Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Hoare, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Ponsonby, and Mr. Curran fearlessly resisted the measure, and, exposed to abuse and vituperation, they supported Mr. Grattan, but could only muster 16 to oppose 127.*

Thus was the final blow struck, and a military despotism established. This measure of the Government was the most ill-advised and unfortunate that had yet been resorted to, and from the evidence of the United Irishmen, served greatly to increase their numbers. It was certain to inflame the people; to confound innocent and guilty; gratify the low passions of a licentious soldiery, and destroy military discipline, as well as domestic security. In a short time, the order was grossly abused, and led to every species of outrage and excess; a man's house was no longer his castle;

* In this debate a practice was commenced, which was more fully carried into effect at the period of the Union—to let loose a set of Government *bravos*, to intimidate the members of the Opposition—stigmatising them by charges of disaffection and sedition—and as causing by their speeches the discontent among the people. Mr. Egan, who, as before stated, was one of the Opposition, now took part with Government, and attacked his old friends, and among them Mr. Grattan. If he had been successful, he would probably have been well rewarded; but the rebuke he received, damped the ardour of that party, and the practice was for a time discontinued. After a humorous allusion to Mr. Egan's grotesque figure and manner, Mr. Grattan applied these lines:—

There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats—
For I am armed so strong in honesty,
That they pass by me as the idle wind,
Which I respect not.

The Speaker, apprehending some evil consequences, sent for the parties, and on searching for Mr. Egan, he was found reposing very quietly in bed.

its sanctity was violated; and at any hour, day or night, and by any of the lowest of the soldiery. Rapine—rape—violation—conflagration—outrage and insult were committed under the appearance of authority, and with perfect impunity, till public calamity became so aggravated, that men began to look upon Government, not merely with horror, but execration.*

The dangerous state to which Ireland was brought, had, ere this time, excited the alarm of many in England. Those opposed to Mr. Pitt, dreaded the effects of his policy; the monied men grew alarmed about the connexion; they saw, that the late escape from invasion was attributable solely to accident. They saw that the just complaints of the people were treated with neglect, and that strong measures had failed. Accordingly, Lord Moira, in the House of Lords, and Mr. Fox, in the Commons, moved an Address to the King, praying him to take into consideration the state of the kingdom of Ireland, and to adopt such healing and lenient measures as were best calculated to restore tranquillity, and conciliate the affections of all classes of his subjects. Mr. Fox was seconded by Sir Francis Burdett,† but his motion was defeated by 220 to 84; and Lord Moira's was equally unsuccessful. Mr. Pitt's party contended that the British Parliament could not interfere in the affairs of Ireland without violating the independence of the Parliament of

* In June, two Roman Catholic chapels in the counties of Tyrone and Armagh were broken open and destroyed by the Orange Party, and their altars levelled to the ground, and this with perfect impunity. In the succeeding year upwards of thirty chapels were burned in the southern parts of Ireland.

† This individual, who began his political career by professing the most democratic principles, now terminates it by ultra tory doctrines, leaving his party, and opposing the Irish, not only with violence but virulence—a melancholy instance how much too long a man may live for the consistency of his character, or the permanence of his fame.

that kingdom. The speech of Mr. Fox was admired and applauded in Ireland,* and his exer-

April 7th, 1797.

* At a meeting of the Whig Club, Abraham Wilkinson, Esq. in the chair, the following resolution was agreed to:—

"That the thanks of this Club be given to the Earl of Moira and the Right Hon. Charles James Fox, and the Minority that supported their late motions in the British Parliament, for their just and necessary exertions against the malignant interference of the British Ministry in the government of this country, by a system of corruption and coercion, tending to subvert the independence of Parliament—introductory of military execution in the place of law,—and threatening to shake the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland."

The following was Lord Moira's reply. Mr. Fox merely returned thanks.

To the Secretary of the Whig Club.

April 30, 1797.

Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, enclosing the resolution by which the Whig Club has testified its approbation of my having called the attention of the British Parliament to the state of Ireland. It is infinitely gratifying to me, that my sentiments respecting our country are sanctioned by this concurrence on the part of persons, who to respectability of private character, add the merit of having associated to support the principles which form our Constitution: principles, the object of which is not only to give to the individual the comfort of feeling himself secure from insult or oppression, but to ascertain the extent of men's privileges, and thereby prevent those dangerous struggles for imaginary rights which so frequently occur against governments of undefined power. No evasion could be more wretched than the argument of Ministers, that the British Parliament, by deliberating on such a question, would trench upon the exclusive functions of the Irish senate: as if a prayer to his Majesty to curb a perverse and ruinous interference of the British Minister in the domestic affairs of Ireland could be an attack on that independence of the Irish Legislature, which I have ever loudly maintained to be indispensable for the harmony and stability of the empire. I have only noticed that point, because the sophistry carried with it this injurious implication, that the Minister spoke the probable sense of the Irish Parliament: and if any thing could ever diminish the veneration of the public towards so exalted an assembly, it would be the supposition that it was capable of lending itself to such a collusion, when scarcely any man of any class in the two kingdoms can be imagined incompetent to make the obvious discrimination. By such as know the tone of the Irish Parliament, the suspicion could not for a moment be entertained; but I rejoice that the case cannot now be misconceived by the less informed part of the public in this country. Against the mischievous inference to which I have alluded, they will oppose the declared sentiments of the most jealous asserters of the Irish Constitution: so that the resolution which you have conveyed to me, is no less satisfactory from patriotic considerations, than flattering as applied to my present feelings.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

MOIRA.

tions on behalf of the Irish were received with thanks and gratitude; but by the partisans of the Irish Government with dissatisfaction not unmixed with apprehension, lest their conduct should become a matter of public and general enquiry, and a national effort be made to remove the ministers. Doctor Duigenan took up the subject, and brought it before the House of Commons, denouncing Mr. Fox's speech as a false, seditious, and malicious libel on the Irish Parliament, and as a flagitious attempt to excite treason and rebellion in the country; and on the 3rd of May, he moved that the libel be read at the bar; he accompanied this proceeding by a most violent attack on the Opposition, and on the people, but in such a strain of abuse that the Government could not support his motion, they moved the order of the day, which was carried, and thus got rid of this extraordinary proposition. Unfortunately for Ireland, the danger which Mr. Grattan had so often deprecated, and against which he had cautioned his countrymen, when he used that figurative phrase—"*Touch not this plant of Gallic growth—its taste is death, though 'tis not the tree of knowledge!!*"—this great calamity had now befallen the country. The people of the north of Ireland, vexed by repeated disappointments—their hopes frustrated, and their favourite measures rejected; goaded by cruel and tyrannical acts of violence, proceeded from turbulence to sedition, and from sedition to treason; they plotted the overthrow of the Government, the alteration of the Constitution, the establishment of a Republic, and the appeal to France for assistance.

On the 14th of April, 1797, in consequence of private information,* fifteen individuals, forming two

* These individuals were Presbyterians and Protestants; not a single Catholic was among them; and those most conspicuous who suffered in the ensuing year, were—

committees, were apprehended in Belfast, by a party of military, under the command of Colonel Barber, and their papers seized: these, on the 29th were laid before the House of Commons, by order of the Lord Lieutenant; they were referred to a Secret Committee; and on the 12th of May their report appeared, which fully disclosed the proceedings of the United Irishmen. It stated the origin of the Society in 1791; that after the French Revolution they sought to establish a Republic in Ireland, and to overturn the Constitution; encouraged by the expectation of aid from France, they represented the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland as incompatible with the happiness of the latter; they communicated with seditious societies in Great Britain. *Their constitution* was a union of Irishmen, of all persuasions, to obtain a reform in the Legislature, founded upon the principles of civil and religious liberty. *The test* was a voluntary declaration that they would persevere in their endeavours to form a brotherhood of affection among Irishmen of every religious persuasion, and to obtain an equal and adequate representation of all the people of Ireland, and with a further declaration that nothing would ever

The Rev. Mr. Acheson, Presbyterian minister of Glenarm, County Antrim—life saved.

The Rev. Mr. Dickson, Presbyterian minister of Portaferry, County Down.
The Rev. Mr. Kilburne, Presbyterian minister of Belfast, County Antrim.
The Rev. Mr. Smyth, Presbyterian minister, County Derry.
The Rev. Mr. Stevelly, Covenanter.
} Imprisoned on tenders, and sent to Fort George.

The Rev. Mr. Simpson, Presbyterian minister, Newtonnards, County Down.
The Rev. Mr. Birch, Presbyterian minister, Saintfield, County Down.
} Transported.

The Rev. Mr. M'Mahon, Presbyterian minister, Hollywood, County Down.
The Rev. Mr. Gibson, Covenanter.
The Rev. Mr. M'Kenny, Covenanter.
} Fled to exile.

induce them to give evidence against any member of the Society; that committees and societies had been appointed in various parts of the country, had collected money and arms, enrolled men, and fee'd counsel to defend their partizans at the assizes; they had of late assumed a military character, but their numbers were much exaggerated. Such was the report. In various Appendixes were set out, the papers seized, which recited the number of men, and the quantity of arms. The Committee annexed to these the declaration of the Society of United Irishmen, in 1791. That of the Belfast United Irishmen in the same year; likewise a letter of Wolfe Tone, condemning the Whig Club, and stating that Mr. Grattan would hesitate very much at their resolutions. These were obviously introduced, with a view to connect the proceedings of the society in latter years with those of 1791, with which they had no relationship whatever—to inculpate the Roman Catholics, and injure their question. If any opinion is to be formed from the style of their papers and their writings, the tenor of their orders and the orthography, the members would appear to have belonged to an ignorant and illiterate class: but the groundwork of the Society was able and efficient.* Every district containing three or more societies elected three persons from each, by ballot, to form a baronial committee; three or more baronial committees elected two persons from each to form a county committee; two or more counties elected three from each to form a provincial committee; and two or more provincials five from each to form a national committee, to meet every month.

In ten northern counties they enrolled 99,411

* Report of Select Committee of House of Commons, May, 1797, No. 2, p. 57.

men,* but their finances seemed low, amounting only to 144*l.* 2*s.* 1*d.*—their armoury also was wretchedly defective;† as, by a return of the counties of Antrim, Armagh, Down, and Louth, in which upwards of 60,000 men were enumerated, they had but 6,346 guns, 2,536 bayonets, 3,816 pikes, 465 pistols, eighteen blunderbusses, and eight cannon.‡ Dr. M'Nevin in his work entitled "Pieces of Irish History," describes the originators of the system.§ He says "*they were farmers, mechanics, manufacturers, and shopkeepers!!!*" Yet these men of little weight, moderate abilities, without fortune, and with no resources, were able in so short a time to organize such a body, with a view to revolutionize a kingdom, and to convulse the empire from centre to circumference! Surely there must have been some very omnipotent motive, and some much more powerful stimulant than could be applied or discovered by persons in the rank of farmers, mechanics, and shopkeepers!! What a censure on Mr. Pitt's conduct!—what a reflection on Lord Clare!—what a satire on Lord Camden's Administration, and British Government in Ireland!!! In fact, these "*farmers, manufacturers, and shopkeepers*" would never have been able to bring about an insurrection, if they had not been aided by Lord Clare and the Ministry—their vigour beyond the law—their abusive speeches—their violent acts—martial law—burnings, free quarters, and torture. It was not until October, 1796, that the military organization began in Ulster, and that Dr. M'Nevin, Arthur

* Idem, p. 64. — Antrim, 22,039 men; Down, 23,769; Derry, 10,000; Tyrone, 12,169; Armagh, 12,273; Monaghan, 3,075; Donegal, 9,648; Cavan, 1,000; Fermanagh, 2,000; Louth, 3,438—all Protestant counties.

† Idem, p. 57.

‡ Idem, p. 65.

|| Pages 77 to 103, New York ed.

O'Connor, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, became United Irishmen; it is also observable that the proposal as *to foreign aid came from France*, and did not originate in Ireland, nor was any accredited messenger sent from the United Irishmen till April, 1797;* and when a plan of insurrection for the North was formed and drawn out, the project was at once abandoned; with respect to Leinster and Munster, the military organization did not commence there till the middle of 1797;† and if reform had been granted, foreign connexion would have been abandoned, and the people would have been reconciled to the Government.

It would be painful and disgusting to relate the various acts of tyranny and oppression that were inflicted on a country, torn by civil war, domestic faction, and religious animosity; one instance of magisterial conduct will show the spirit that influenced that body. Mr. M'Naghten, a magistrate of Antrim, summoned a number of persons to appear at a private house, to be examined on oath as to their knowledge of any unlawful assembly, or the taking of any unlawful oaths. Several very respectable persons attended, but declined to be examined on so vague a proceeding, and without any specific charge being made against any individual; upon which, a military party being in readiness, took nine of the persons to gaol *for a contempt*, where they remained in the depth of a most inclement winter, without bail. At an assizes in the north, before Mr. Toler, afterwards Lord Norbury, the prisoner was brought to trial in a state of intoxication; he was drunk when he was arraigned—he was drunk when he was tried‡—and

* Though Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor proceeded to the Continent to meet Hoche in 1796, neither of them were then United Irishmen.

† M'Nevin's Evidence, Lords' Committee Report.

‡ The judge, who was very short sighted, did not of course perceive it.

he was drunk when he was hanged. At the Derry assizes, the same Judge, in his charge to the Grand Jury, stated, that he had just received the sacrament; and having his mind set at ease, was much better prepared to go through the awful business in which he was engaged: he then tried a man for a riot, and sentenced him to two years' imprisonment, *and to be flogged, unless he gave useful information to the neighbouring magistrate*—(Sir Geo. Hill.) In another case, a prisoner, sixty-five years of age, was accused of buying a ball-cartridge from a soldier; he *sentenced the old man to be flogged,* but having a good character, the jury interfered, so Judge Toler sentenced him only to *two years' imprisonment,* and 50*l.* fine!!! Such were the judicial proceedings. With respect to the juries, the mode of selecting them may be judged from the following occurrence:—At Saintfield, in the county Down, twelve persons were tried for assaulting a dwelling-house; the Rev. Mr. Clelland, tutor to Lord Castlereagh, was the chief witness on the occasion: he was charged with having selected the jury; the prisoners made a legal objection, and, after eleven hours' trial, they were acquitted. Mr. Curran's speech on the occasion gives some idea of the proceedings adopted towards the people. His description of the reverend gentleman, magistrate, tutor, and witness, is rather amusing. After a speech of considerable length, delivered with great animation and eloquence, he said—

"This was a challenge on matter of the highest moment to the community, to his clients, and to the purity of a court of justice. His object was to shew that the grand pannel of the county from which the present pannel was taken, was not that fair and disinterested pannel to which he could wish to commit the lives and liberties of his unfortunate clients; and therefore he found himself in duty bound to use his best exertions to have it set aside, that justice—impartial justice—may be honestly dispensed.

Trial by jury was a most valuable privilege when it was preserved pure—and hence it was, that a great law Lord had stated, that a jury ought to be as a leaf of white paper, or, in the language of the present Court, it ought to be untinged; it ought to be a pure, unadulterated water, free from every mixture that could affect its transparency—otherwise it would only be tainted, drawn from the poisoned fountain, which flowed with certain death towards his client; or, it would be a sheet of paper blurred, and scrawled over with characters vile and detestable.—This was no common period in the history of the world—they were no ordinary transactions which were now passing before us—all Europe was shook to the centre; we felt its force, and were likely to be involved in its consequences. There was no man who had sense enough to be conscious of his own existence, who could hold himself disengaged and unconcerned amidst the present scenes—and to say that a man was unbiassed and unprejudiced is the surest proof that he is both. Prejudice was the cobweb which caught vulgar minds, but the prejudices of the present day float in the upper regions—they entangle the lofty heads—they are bowing them down—you see them as they flutter, and you hear them as they buzz. Mr. Clelland was become a very public and a very active man; he has his mind, I doubt not, stored with the most useful and extensive erudition—he is clothed with the sacred office of a Minister of the Gospel of peace; he is a magistrate of the county—tutor of a young lord—he is employed as agent to some large properties—he is reputably connected and universally esteemed, and is therefore a man of no small weight and consideration in this county. He has more than once positively sworn that he applied to the High Sheriff—that he struck off no name but those who wanted freeholds; but to-day he finds that freeholders were struck off by his own pen; he tells you, my Lord, and Gentlemen Triers, with equal modesty and ingenuity, that he has made a—*mistake*. He returns eighty-one names to the Sheriff—he receives blank summonses, and fills up what he deems convenient. Gracious Heaven! what are the courts of justice? What is trial by jury? What is the country brought to? Were it told in the courts above — were it told in other countries—were it told in Westminster-hall that such a man was permitted to return near one-half of the Grand Panel of the county from one particular district—a district under severe distress—a district to which

he is agent, and on which, with the authority he possesses, he is able to bring great calamity. He ascends the pulpit with the Gospel of benignity and peace; he endeavours to impress himself and his hearers with its meek and holy spirit. He descends, throws off the purple, seizes the insurrection act in the one hand, and the whip in the other; flies by night and by day after his game—and with his heart panting, his breath exhausted, and his belly at the ground in the chase, he turns round and tells you that his mind is unprejudiced—that his heart is full of humanity—and that all his hopes, fears, and wishes, are a pure innocent mixture of milk and water."

Every effort in Parliament to remedy the grievances of the nation was useless; and it may appear singular that the question of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation should have been brought forward by Mr. Ponsonby. The circumstances which led to that were as follows:—In December, 1796, a public meeting was held at Belfast, and William Sampson, Arthur O'Connor, R. Symes, and Mr. Tennent, with five others, were appointed to draw up resolutions to be laid before the Lord Lieutenant; they set forth—

"That the imperfect state of the representation in the House of Commons is the primary cause of the discontents.

"That the public mind would be restored to tranquillity and, every impending danger averted, by such a reform as would secure population and property their due weight, without distinction on account of religion.

"That a declaration fairly manifested on the part of the Government, to comply with the just desires of the people, would produce the happiest effects, as it would conciliate the affections of the people, whose object was reform alone, and thus bid defiance to foreign and domestic enemies."

These were laid before the Lord Lieutenant, and if they had met with a favourable reception, and had been promptly acted on, they might have prevented the catastrophe that followed, and there would have been neither insurrection, invasion, nor

union; and the breach between the King and the people would have closed. This is distinctly set forth in the memoir delivered to Government by O'Connor, Emmett, and M'Nevin. But that did not seem to be the object of the Government party; they wished to carry the Legislative Union; and accordingly their writers assailed these resolutions, and their authors, with unmeasured abuse, and poured upon both all their indignation and anger, and declared that no terms should be kept with such men. Thus they made it appear, that attachment to the people and their liberties was not meant to imply attachment to the Government, but that loyalty should have *ulterior views*.

Mr. Grattan had alluded to a union in some of his late speeches; and it now began seriously to be entertained by the Minister in Ireland. It had long since been entertained by a party in England, as appears from the letters of Lord Shelburne, in 1782,* and from the communications of the Duke of Portland, though less distinct, in 1795.† With this view, Parliamentary reform had been constantly rejected; these wily politicians knowing, that if the abuse of the institution of Parliament rendered the body little valued or respected, the people might become indifferent whether it should be retained or lost, and thus their project of union would have a certain and easy victory.

The leading men of the Opposition, therefore, attached much importance to the Belfast resolutions, and before Mr. Ponsonby brought forward his plan of reform, in May 1797, Emmett's party sought to open a communication with them. Mr. Ponsonby sent for Mr. Grattan, and he, Curran, and the Ponsonbys, met in order to confer on the prudence of an interview with Emmett and his friends. They wished the latter to join on the

* See Vol. II. 289-92. † Ante, p. 193.

question of reform,—give up annual elections and universal suffrage, and acquiesce in the plan about to be submitted to Parliament. To this some of Emmett's party were disposed ;* and Nelson, who was one of them, and well acquainted with the people of the North, their feelings, and wishes, was understood to assent. Mr. Ponsonby thought it would considerably strengthen his case if he was authorized to declare that the discontented party had offered to be satisfied, and to withdraw their extravagant demands if the Government would assent to the proposed reform. Accordingly, the leaders of the Opposition discussed the point: they sat late,—talked a good deal about the proposed interview,—some doubted the wisdom of it, and they broke up without deciding anything. However, Mr. Grattan, on his return home, made up his mind not to hold the meeting, and sent off to Mr. Ponsonby, advising them against such a step, as it probably would lead to no good, and might place them in an embarrassing situation. He very likely thought that Government would not yield, and neither party listen to terms. Certainly, with such a party in power as Lord Camden and Lord Clare, this conclusion was right, but with any other it would have been fatal; for on a review of the whole case, it may be said that the leaders of the United Irishmen were sincere. The North had relaxed its efforts against the Government; great difficulties were placed in the way of the United men; and, above all, they found that they could not depend upon each other; so they would gladly have listened to any reasonable terms of accommodation. In his evidence, Emmett says, that if the reform had been adopted, the Executive Directory of the United Irishmen

* M'Nevin's Evidence.—*Pieces of Irish History.* New York edit. p. 206.

would have sent a messenger* to France to tell them "*that the difference between the people and the Government was adjusted, and not to attempt a second invasion.*" Thus it may fairly be said, that all the misfortunes that befell the country were attributable to Lords Camden and Clare; they lost the opportunity of recalling the United Irishmen to a sense of loyalty and of duty. This proceeding having ended,—and from the evidence of the United party, it appears it was the only connexion ever subsisting between them and the members of the Opposition,†—Mr. Ponsonby brought forward his motion on the subject of reform, but he could only muster 30 to 117 : thus ended this measure, which Mr. Flood, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Ponsonby, and all the leading patriots had so long contended for, and which, though so delayed, and so abridged, even at this late period, the United men declared would have satisfied the country.‡ The Opposition, finding their labours useless, and the task of opposing the violent measures of Government hopeless, formed the resolution to retire; and on the debate on the motion of reform, Mr. Grattan declared their intention no longer to attend the House of Commons. His advice to Government, and his remonstrance with them on their violent conduct, extorted praise even from those to whom it was addressed; and, among others, from Lord Castlereagh, who complimented him on the manner and temper with which he had treated the subject. After an able and close investiga-

* Detailed statement by O'Connor, Emmett, and McNevin, p. 189. Emmett's Evidence, New York edition, p. 215.

† The statements of Mr. Gifford in his Life of Pitt upon this subject are not to be credited—he was wholly ignorant of Irish affairs.

‡ Pieces of Irish History, p. 206. The evidence as reported by Lord Clare, and published by the Lords, is very defective and garbled, and in many parts the sense is wholly altered: this appears on comparing it with the American publication; and when Dr. McNevin expostulated with Lord Clare on this, he replied, "*He must not expect they would publish more than* WOULD ANSWER THEIR PURPOSE."

tion into the causes of the public disorder and disturbance in Ireland, Mr. Grattan observed :—

* * * * "Gentlemen chiefly rely on the report of the Secret Committee, and allege that a conspiracy appears from that report to have established itself in a way so extensive and formidable as to render any conciliatory measure inadmissible; 'they must be subdued before they shall be relieved;' such are the words of Gentlemen—dangerous and inconsiderate words! but from that very report I draw a conclusion diametrically opposite; from that report I conclude that Parliamentary Reform is not merely eligible, but absolutely indispensable. In that report, and from the speeches of Gentlemen, we learn that a conspiracy has existed for some years; that it was composed originally of persons of no powerful or extensive influence—and yet these men, under prosecution and discountenance, have been so extended as to reach every county in the kingdom, to levy a great army, to provide arms and ammunition, and to alarm, as the report states, the existence of the Government, with the number of its proselytes, procured by these two popular subjects—Parliamentary Reform, and Catholic Emancipation. It appears, then, that they have recruited by these topics, and have spread their influence, notwithstanding your system of coercion, every where; that notwithstanding your Convention Bill of 1793, it passed that year; that this convention has grown—that notwithstanding your gunpowder act, it has armed and increased its military stores under that act—that notwithstanding your insurrection act, another bill to disarm, it has greatly added to its magazines—and that notwithstanding the suspension of the Habeas Corpus bill, and Gen. Lake's proclamation, it has multiplied its proselytes. I should have asked, had I been on the Secret Committee, whether the number of United Irishmen had not increased very much since Gen. Lake's proclamation — and by General Lake's proclamation. It appears from that report, that just as your system of coercion advanced, the United Irishmen advanced—that the measures you took to coerce, strengthened — to disperse, collected—to disarm, armed—and to render them weak and odious, made them popular and powerful—whereas, on the other hand, you have loaded Parliament and Government with the odium of an oppressive system, and with the further odium of re-

jecting these two popular topics, which you allow are the most likely to gain the heart of the nation, and to be the beloved objects of the people; in short, you have given to the United Irishmen the popularity of suffering under acts of power, and the popularity of offering acts of privilege—acts giving to the Catholics emancipation—to the people a full and free representation; and to the Parliament you have given the odium of passing those acts of power, and of rejecting those acts of privilege. What, then, remains but to reverse your conduct, and offer to your people immediately those acts of privilege—those acts which you allow, while you allege they are the pretext of some committees, are the great object of the nation; by such, I say, if you cannot reconcile all, you will reconcile the nation,—you will take from the United Irishmen their proselytes—you will annex those proselytes to Parliament, and if you do not annex every man you will annex the people. Gentlemen are reduced in the course of their argument to the necessity of saying that the people would not be satisfied with the plan of reform submitted; they allow the reform to be the present object of the people; hereafter it may not, but they say the people would not be satisfied with this reform. Sir, we have sent our plan to different persons who are much in the confidence of the people, and to persons who have a great lead among the different sects of our fellow-citizens—they have considered the plan, and have consulted with one another, and have returned us for answer that the plan submitted, would be highly agreeable to them. * * * *

"I have in my hand a paper signed by 900 persons, considerable men in business, and northern merchants, containing the following resolutions in substance,—that they conceive the cause of the present discontent to be the miserable state of the representation—that the discontent and suffering will continue until Parliament shall be reformed, and that they will persist in the pursuit of that object, and will not lose sight of it by cavils at the plan, but will expect and be satisfied with such a plan as does substantially restore to the community the right of electing the House of Commons—securing its independency against the influence of the Crown—limiting the duration of Parliament, and extending to his Majesty's subjects the privileges of the Constitution, without distinction of religion. Such a plan we offer you; that is our plan of peace—our idea of strength and union against a foreign enemy; we conceive

that all your other plans have failed; you tried them—you tried your revenue, and you failed—you tried your public credit—it has failed; you tried armed force—it has failed; you have attempted to combat democracy by armies, and you failed; you sent armies against your enemies to combat that principle, and you failed; you sent armies against your people, and you failed. You conquered your laws indeed—you conquered the person of the subject—but you could not subdue his mind—you could not conquer the passion or the principle; on the contrary, you enflamed both; what then remains? Try this plan—Reform the Parliament; let the King identify with his people; there is his strength—let him share with them, or rather let them share with him, the blessings of the Constitution; as they have given him the powers of government, let him restore to them the rights of self-legislation—without that they have no liberty, and without a full and free representation in the Commons, they have not that—they have the name indeed, but they have not the substance.

"There are in our Constitution three great Presidencies, or chairs—the Throne; the chair of the Nobles; and the chair of the Commons, that is, the chair, or what should be the chair, of the people. If his Majesty is satisfied with being seated in the first, and will leave the two others to the Peers and the people—he will reign long and securely, because the Peers and the people in securing to him the possession of his seat, secure to themselves the possession of theirs; but if he shall be advised to take possession of the three chairs, and endeavour to set himself in all of them, his situation is precarious and unnatural, and the situation of his people is the condition of bondsmen. Such a people have no political pride nor political interest to defend, and therefore such a people will not be enthusiasts to defend the Throne against its enemies, foreign or domestic. The privileges of the Constitution were the protection of the people against the King, they are now the armour of of the King against democracy. In this opinion we have submitted our plan, and we have deprecated yours. What is your plan? There are but two measures in the country—Reform, or force. We have offered you the former, you seem inclined to the latter. Let us consider it—"to subdue, to coerce, to establish unqualified submission." An arduous, a precarious undertaking—have you well weighed all its consequences? Is there not much of passion in your

judgment?—have you not lost your temper a little in the contest? I am sure you have shewn this night symptoms of irritation—a certain impatience of the complaints of the people. So it was in the American business. Nothing less in that contest than their unconditional submission—alas! what was the consequence? As far as you have tried your experiment here it has failed—the report shews you it has failed. It has increased the evil it would restrain—it has propagated the principles it would punish, but if repeated and invigorated, you think it will have more success—I apprehend not. Don't you perceive that instead of strengthening monarchy by constitutional principles, you are attempting to give it force by despotic ones?—that you are giving the new principle the advantage of success abroad, and of suffering at home—and that you are losing the people, while you think you are strengthening the Throne—that you have made a false alliance with unnatural principles, and instead of identifying with the people, you identify with abuses. Before they are to be reformed, rebellion, you tell us, must be subdued. You tried that experiment in America—America required self-legislation—you attempted to subdue America by force of angry laws, and by force of arms—you exacted of America unconditional submission—the Stamp Act and the tea tax were only pretexts—so you said; the object, you said, was separation—so here the Reform of Parliament, you say, and Catholic emancipation, are only pretexts—the object you say is separation—and here you exact unconditional submission—"YOU MUST SUBDUE BEFORE YOU REFORM;"—Indeed!—Alas! you think so; but you forget you subdue by reforming;—it is the best conquest you can obtain over your own people. But let me suppose you succeed—*what is your success?—a military government — a perfect despotism — a hapless victory over the principles of a mild Government and a mild Constitution — a Union! — but what may be the ultimate consequence of such a victory?—a separation.* Let us suppose that the war continues, and that your conquest over your own people is interrupted by a French invasion—what would be your situation then? I do not wish to think of it; but I wish you to think of it, and to make a better preparation against such an event than such conquests and such victories. When you consider the state of your

arms abroad, and the ill-assured state of your government at home, precipitating on such a system, surely you should pause a little:—even on the event of a peace you are ill secured against a future war, which the state of Ireland under such a system would be too apt to invite; but on the event of the continuation of the war—your system is perilous indeed—I speak without asperity—I speak without resentment—I speak, perhaps, my delusion; but it is my heartfelt conviction—I speak my apprehension for the immediate state of our liberty, and for the ultimate state of the empire; I see, or I imagine I see, in this system, every thing which is dangerous to both; I hope I am mistaken; at least I hope I exaggerate—possibly I may—if so, I shall acknowledge my error with more satisfaction than is usual in the acknowledgment of error. I cannot, however, banish from my memory the lesson of the American war, and yet at that time English Government was at the head of Europe, and was possessed of resources comparatively unbroken. If that lesson has no effect on Ministers, surely I can suggest nothing that will. We have offered you our measure—you will reject it; we deprecate yours—you will persevere; having no hopes left to persuade or to dissuade, and having discharged our duty, we shall trouble you no more, and AFTER THIS DAY SHALL NOT ATTEND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS!"

Mr. Pitt was becoming unpopular in England.* The enthusiasm excited in his favour by the French revolution had nearly died away. His attempt to hang his early friends, Horne Tooke, Hardy, and other reformers, in which he was foiled by the virtue of British juries, had injured his reputation. The bad success that attended his military expeditions, and his negotiations with France; the stoppage of cash payments; the neglect of Ireland; and now the mutiny of the seamen at the Nore, had increased national discontent, as well as ministerial embarrassment; while in Ireland, his handing over the people to

* Upwards of thirty counties and cities in England assembled, and passed addresses, praying the King to remove Mr. Pitt from the royal councils *for ever*.

military law,—his peremptory refusal to entertain Mr. Fox's motion in favour of lenient measures towards Ireland,—had rendered him and his government not only unpopular, but odious to all except the high ascendancy party, who seemed bent on giving him a desperate but steady support. It is, however, due to the character of Ireland, to say, that her people did not silently behold the spoliation of their dearest rights, the introduction of unconstitutional measures, or the enforcement of military execution; and suffer, without remonstrance, the deprivation of law and liberty. The counties of Antrim, Armagh, Kildare, and King's County; the cities of Dublin and Cork; the members of the Bar and the Whig Club, protested against the conduct of the Government. Some of them addressed the King, and complained of his Minister, that he had introduced the most corrupt practices into Parliament for the purpose of buying the members; that he had suspended the law of the land; had imprisoned and transported the people without trial; and, finally, had imposed on the country military law and military government.

The following are extracts from the address of the people of Dublin to the King, 8th April, 1797:—

"Your Ministers have been publicly charged with the sale of peerages, for the purpose of procuring seats in Parliament, and when evidence was offered to convict them of the same, they shrunk from the enquiry. Places have been created, for the professed purpose of procuring majorities in Parliament, and these attacks upon the constitution have been accompanied by a doctrine which pleaded for the necessity of corrupting the Legislature, in a memorable declaration, equally public and audacious.

"Your Ministers have endeavoured to support their system of corruption by terror and violence, and accordingly have applied to Parliament for the enaction of cer-

tain statutes, namely, the Gunpowder Bill, Convention Bill, Insurrection Bill, and a bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, whereby your subjects have been deprived of their personal liberty, their dearest rights, and of all those inestimable privileges, for the defence of which your Majesty's family was chosen to the sovereignty of these kingdoms.

"That in addition to all this, your Ministers have of late issued an order for putting the North under military government and military execution — an order which amounts to an exercise of a dispensing power, lawless, unprecedented, and outrageous. That here we beg leave to submit to your Majesty how dangerous such a measure, if persisted in, may be to the connexion of the two countries, and how rash these Ministers must be who persevere in a war with France, and at the same time commence hostilities against the North of Ireland.

"That the conduct of your Ministers towards the Catholics of Ireland has been equally impolitic and illiberal; and notwithstanding your gracious recommendation from the Throne in favour of your Catholic subjects, they caused several innocent members of the Catholic communion to be tried for their lives, and endeavoured by influence to exclude Catholics from those offices and franchises to which by law they were admissible, exercised against their characters the most unqualified abuse; and your English Ministers having authorized your representative Earl Fitzwilliam to hold out the hopes of full emancipation, they recalled him for supporting the same; and when your people petitioned your Majesty in expressions of concern and disappointment, they received no answer, save only troops poured into this country by those Ministers."

Address from the county of Armagh, convened by the High Sheriff, 19th April :—

"We complain, Sire, that the British constitution is enjoyed by us in name only. The English Cabinet is the real efficient power which guides, directs, and actuates the Irish Government. Through its influence, laws are capriciously enacted and repealed; under its guidance, a system of organized corruption has established itself—and measures are carried into effect, not by arguments drawn from reason and policy, but by the efforts of venality, frontless

and unblushing; coercive laws are made and penalties inflicted, altogether disproportioned to the alleged offences; the people are goaded to madness by accumulated miseries and oppression, and if they sigh or murmur, the sigh is treason and the murmur death. The Convention Bill has taken from your Majesty's subjects even the right to complain, the last sad refuge of distressed and suffering humanity. An enemy, powerful and full of animosity, has appeared on our coasts, and in the moment of distress, our Government manifested itself impotent and incapable of protecting the people—yet, when the winds had providentially prevented the intended invasion, it prepared not to resist the returning foe, but to alienate the affections of the people, by despoiling them of their only protection—their arms.

"Your subjects, Sire, are daily committed to prison, under the Insurrection Act, for frivolous pretexts, and, that one cruelty may be superadded to another, the Habeas Corpus Act has been suspended, and innocent and unoffending men confined without hope of trial, liberation, or redress. The richest and most populous province in the kingdom has been, in defiance of truth and justice, stigmatized and illegally treated, as in a state of insurrection; our most useful citizens, torn from their families and dearest connexions, are, without trial by jury, dragged to the fleet like the most atrocious felons, and military coercion has taken place of common law.

"Sire, we humbly submit to your consideration, that if your people were fairly and adequately represented in Parliament, most of these evils would have been prevented in their very origin.

"In this kingdom, three-fourths of your Majesty's loyal people are aliens to many of the blessings of the constitution. The Roman Catholics exist under restrictions, hostile to the common rights of mankind, and disgraceful to the age in which we live. Your Majesty's Ministers, Sire, ungenerously taking advantage of these restrictions, have *too long propagated amongst us religious animosities, and the fiery persecutions of merciless bigotry.* Against these men, at this moment, Sire, Irishmen of every religious persuasion lift up their voice with one accord. We arraign them of crimes at which humanity shudders, and from which Christianity turns an abhorrent eye. Of these enormities, we accuse them before our country—before the whole Bri-

tish empire—before our King—in the face of the world—in the presence of God. For these reasons, Sire, we pray your Majesty to aid your people in reforming the Parliament, in emancipating the Catholics, and to dismiss your present Ministers from your councils FOR EVER."

The county of Antrim, summoned by the Sheriff, on the 8th of May, thus addressed his Majesty :—

"Your Ministers have laboured with the most remorseless perseverance, *to revive those senseless and barbarous religious antipathies, so fatal to morals and to peace,* and so abhorrent to the mild and merciful spirit of the Gospel.

"They have answered our demands for a full and fair participation of the rights and privileges of the British constitution, and our just complaints of their rapacity, corruption, and oppression, by the most atrocious calumnies against our characters, and the most merciless prosecution against our lives; and, in order more effectually to organize their system of vengeance and servitude, they have endeavoured, *through the medium of spies and informers, 'those baneful instruments of despotism,' to destroy public confidence, and poison the intercourse of private life;* they have employed the forms of that legislation, of which they had destroyed the substance, in the enactment of penal laws, by which they have successively abrogated the right of arms for self-protection, the right of being free from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and that sacred right of trial by a jury of our country:—rights, for the protection of which 'the united will of a people resolved to be free,' called your Majesty's illustrious family to the Throne.

"One enormity only remained unattempted by your Majesty's Ministers, and upon that too have they, at last, presumed to adventure, 'To set up a prerogative avowedly against the law,' and to let loose upon your subjects all the horrors of licentious power and military force, by sending bands of mercenaries in every direction, unattended in general by civil or even military officers, to plunder the houses, once the sanctuaries of your faithful people, of those arms, which were necessary for their protection and defence; which form such an essential feature of discrimination between the freeman and the slave; and which (when assistance could not be obtained from your Majesty's

Ministers) *they* VOLUNTARILY wielded in defence of your person and Government.

"Such are the measures, by which the submission that the prerogative owes to the law, has been blasphemously disclaimed; by which the constitution has given place to the bayonet, and the people have been put out of the protection of the peace; by which numbers of our fellow-subjects have been banished, without even the forms of trial, or are daily crowded into dungeons, and this only, because they have dared to UNITE together, in the vindication of common right, in the just and legal resistance of common oppression, in the kind and brotherly consolation of common suffering.

"Such, Sire, are the grievances of a people who know that their title to liberty is from GOD and Nature, which no human law can abrogate, nor authority take away.

"Had your Majesty's people of Ireland, 'without regard to religious distinction,' been fully and fairly represented in the Commons House of Parliament, the evils of which we complain could never have existed; we therefore implore your Majesty, as you value the happiness of your people, to aid them in the speedy attainment of that inestimable blessing."

The Whig Club and the Members of the Bar recorded their sentiments on the occasion. The following report was received from the committee appointed to inquire what steps it would be proper for the Club to take on behalf of their fellow-subjects in the North, and unanimously agreed to:—

"Resolved, That we are of opinion, that the original cause of the present discontents of the North is to be traced to the inadequate representation of the people in Parliament.

"That those discontents have increased with the measures taken to control them, and by those measures; and that the plan of coercion has totally and entirely failed.

"That the only remedy is a reform in Parliament, founded on the abolition of all religious distinctions, and that we will not be disheartened by the rejection of that measure, but will pursue the same in every situation in life, as the only measure likely to restore to the subject liberty, to the laws their due authority, and to secure the peace of the country."

At a meeting of gentlemen of the Bar, on the 17th day of May, 1797, Francis Dobbs, Esq., in the chair, the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to; and it was at the same time determined, that all persons present should subscribe their names, and such other gentlemen of the Bar as might approve thereof:—

"Warmly attached to the constitution of King, Lords, and Commons, ardently wishing its preservation, and filled with the deepest anxiety, which a sense of present, and a dread of future calamity can produce, we feel ourselves called upon to come to the following resolutions:—

"That we are of opinion, that all temperate and prudent means of conciliating the attachment of the people ought to have preceded the adoption of new and violent modes of coercion; and that to rely on the latter in times of great national ferment, is inconsistent with the principles of a free constitution, calculated to inflame, rather than to repress disturbance, and promote rather than to check the progress of discontent.

"That we are firmly persuaded that an adequate reform of the representation of the people, including the equal communication of political privilege, without distinction of religious opinions, and providing for the fair expression of the public sentiment in the House of Commons, is a measure founded in justice, dictated by prudence, and pressed by necessity, and would at this awful crisis have the happiest and most powerful effect in restoring the tranquillity of the country, in depriving the friends of anarchy of a pretext which shelters their criminal purposes, in reconciling to the constitution those who are dissatisfied only with its abuses, and in promoting a zealous and animated union amongst all virtuous citizens, so peculiarly necessary at the present moment, and without which it is impossible at any time to ensure a continuance of prosperity, strength, and happiness to a nation.

"That the firm and temperate expression of these sentiments by all in the community who entertain them, would be of the highest advantage at this alarming crisis; serving to convince Government of the propriety of yielding to the moderate wishes of the people, and thereby defeating the designs of any party dangerous to the country, and

incompatible with the principles and safety of our constitution."

Francis Dobbs	Dan. Stewart	F. Magan
Alex. Stewart	R. C. Bryanton	E. F. Hackett
Joseph Huband	Peter Fox	S. Ward
George Barnes	Wm. Berwick	R. Calcut
A. Seton	R. Bride	Or. Grogan
J. Pratt Winter	J. R. Galbraith	B. Hoare
Thos. Geo. Digby	F. Evans	Peter Burroughs
Edw. Lawson	C. Graydon	Wm. Sampson
Wm. Colles	C. Burton	R. Holmes
Rich. Guinness	W. Cooley	A. Dawson
Geo. French	B. B. Harvey	J. Donovan
P. O'Hanlon	T. Church	Rich. Collis
George Evans	T. Smith	Wm. Lackington
H. T. Walsh	G. P. Maquay	Owen M'Dermott
John Guthrie	T. Scott	Robert Orr
J. Jn. M'Donald	Jo. Wilson	P. Locke
Bolton Waller	R. Johnson	Wm. Richards
J. P. Curran	L. M'Nally	George Ponsonby
J. G. Lecky	R. N. Bennet	George Grant
J. Moore	D. T. Rice	John Cooke
T. A. Emmett	Wm. Smith	Henry Flood
J. Parsons	J. F. D'Arcy	George Stawel
T. C. Parsons	Matthew Weld	John Moore, jun.
C. F. Frizell	H. Adair	Wm. O'Regan.
Henry Sheares	Thos. Sinclair.	

Such were the terms in which the people of Ireland spoke to the king,—a language not inferior to the remonstrances of the English in the time of Charles the First, which reflected such honour on the British name,—nor to the declaration of the American people at the period of their glorious revolution, whose sober constitutional phraseology, replete with dignity and spirit, upheld the sacred principles of universal freedom. These addresses too of the Irish will live and uphold the character of their country, and rescue her name from unmerited reproaches. The Government of Ireland, finding these proceedings were injurious to their character—likely to become general throughout

the kingdom, and prove fatal to their continuance in office, resolved at once to stop them. On the 17th of May, Government issued a proclamation* against the United Irishmen, and by it they prohibited all persons from meeting in unusual numbers, *under any pretence whatever, and ordered the military to suppress them.* The proclamation was sent to Lord Carhampton†, (the commander-in-chief), who immediately issued a general order to the military *to act without waiting for directions from the civil magistrate.* In consequence of this, several counties that were about to assemble, countermanded the meetings. Mr. Pelham, the Secretary, wrote to the High Sheriff of the King's County, and the county of Kildare, that the military would act, and that the *Lord Lieutenant would direct His Majesty's forces to prevent an assembly so unusual as the meeting of the inhabitants of a county; and accordingly an armed party of soldiers took post in the room, where the freeholders of one of the counties were to assemble!* Such were the measures pursued by Lord Camden, Lord Clare, and Mr. Pitt!—such was the mode to stifle the voice of the nation!

Mr. Grattan, finding that his exertions were no longer of any avail,—that he could not support the measures of Government consistently with his duty or his feelings, nor oppose them with any hope of success; and unwilling by further opposition to countenance the united party, whose principles he entirely disapproved of, determined not merely to secede along with Mr. Ponsonby and other members of that party, but to retire from parliament altogether. As the general election now approached, a meeting of the freemen and freeholders of Dublin was held on the 29th of July, 1797, when it was resolved—

* Report of Secret Committee, No. 11, p. 120.
† Idem, No. 12, p. 128.

"That by right and the principles of the constitution, the people are entitled *exclusively* to appoint the third estate of the Legislature, and that the security of her civil and political liberty depends upon the uninterrupted enjoyment of that indefeasible right.

"That as the Commons House is at present constituted, the return of more than two-thirds thereof is usurped by a few individuals as private property, and that as to the remainder, any attempt to exercise the popular right is rendered fruitless, through the corrupt and enormous influence of the Crown, and hazardous through the recent introduction and violent exercise of a military power, by which great numbers of our unfortunate countrymen, on the slightest suspicions of their entertaining political opinions different from those of the present Administration, have had their houses burned, or been themselves transported or put to death without even the *form of accusation or trial!*

"That not wishing to have any exercise of the elective suffrage that is not *free*, nor any representation of the people that is not *full*, *fair*, and *adequate*, we will abstain from any interference whatever at the ensuing election, and, as far as in us lies, leave to the King's Ministers the appointment of the King's Parliament.

"That we do heartily approve of the principles and sentiments contained in the Address of our late excellent representative the Right Hon. HENRY GRATTAN; and that we are sensible he has not retired from that post which he so eminently filled as long as any hope remained that the Parliamentary exercise of his virtues and talents could be of advantage to his country. But we trust he will recollect that his public duty does not cease with his representative situation."

"V. B. LAWLESS, Chairman."*

To these resolutions Mr. Grattan replied in the following manner:—

MY FELLOW-CITIZENS,—A slight indisposition has prevented me from giving your resolution an immediate answer. When the country is put down—the press destroyed—and public meetings, for the purpose of exercising the right of petition to remove Ministers, are

* Afterwards Lord Cloncurry, created a peer of England during the administration of Lord Anglesey, September, 1831.

threatened and dispersed by the military, I agree with you that a general election is no more than an opportunity to exercise, by permission of the army, the solitary privilege to return a few representatives of the people to a House occupied by the representatives of boroughs.

"When the Irish Parliament was perpetual or provincial, it was of little moment how that Parliament was constituted; but becoming independent, it became essential that it should become constitutional; and in order to be constitutional, it was necessary that the Commons should form an integral part thereof; fourteen years you gave to the experiment, and having failed, withdraw. You refuse to take a small portion of that representation, the whole of which belongs to you; you will not confirm an unjust distribution of your property, by becoming a poor rent-charger on a poor portion of your inheritance; you refuse to give your sanction to your exclusion, and will not attend a ceremony which has proved the trade of the individual and the ruin of the country. While I entertain such an opinion, I beg to express my profound respect for some enlightened and valuable individuals who differ from me; opposed to their opinion, I should suspect my own if it was not fortified by yours. I think the people of this country are perfectly right when they insist to be nothing less than the whole of the third estate: the people are in contemplation of the constitution only a part of the Legislature; but they are the whole of the Commons. Is that too much? They gave the Crown—they ask the representation: they ask the representation of that Prince to whom they gave the Crown. Without derogating from any of those rights which exist, independent of any artificial formation, the people claim under the general constitution of the land, and under their own particular declaration of right, to be an integral part of the Legislature. The constitution tells them that their liberty exists in their exemption from any laws save those to which by representation they consent; their declaration of right tells them that the King, the Lords, and the Commons of Ireland, are the only body competent to make her laws, by which it is not only asserted that the Irish Parliament is exclusively the Irish Legislature, but that the people are an integral part thereof. If then the people are not suffered to form that integral part, the constitution of the realm and the claim of right are evaded and defeated. The Minister stands in

the place of Parliament—he becomes the arbiter of your lives and fortunes, and transfers that dominion to the British Cabinet, on whom he depends; and thus re-imposes on this realm the legislative power of another country. When your Ministers tell you that the reform of Parliament was only a popular pretence, I cannot believe them to be in earnest. I wish they had made the experiment—happy had it been for the country—happy had it been for themselves—they would then indeed have possessed but one-third of the constitution, but they would not have lost the whole of the empire.

"Foreign disgrace leads naturally, and of course, to the subject of domestic oppression. I cannot here omit that part of your resolution which adverts to the barbarities committed on the habitations, property, and persons of the people—and I beg to join with yours my testimony against such repeated, wanton, savage, abominable, and permitted outrages—barbarities and murders, such as no printer will now dare to publish, lest he should be plundered or murdered for the ordinary exercise of his trade.

"I beg to take this opportunity of returning my thanks to the Aldermen of Skinner's-alley, who have expressed their approbation of my conduct. I do believe our measures were agreeable to the sense of the nation—I lament they were not seconded by the majority of Parliament—if that majority, whose motives I do not discuss, whose infatuation I lament;—if that majority, instead of attaching itself to the Court, had considered itself as part and parcel of the people, they had consulted their dignity better. Why am I superior to Ministers or Viceroys? Because I do not assume to be superior to my fellow-citizens. Had that majority taken a proud post, and identified with the people—had they seized the opportunity of doing justice to Ireland, and instead of voting millions without getting anything for the country, supported us in our motion to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry—in our motion in an equal trade—in our attempts to emancipate the Catholics, and to reform the Parliament, their country would now have liberty and peace instead of distraction at home and negociation abroad—where the British negociator remains with 110 Irish boroughs about his neck to pay for every felony the Minister has committed on the Irish—so many Erics in empire.

"You express a wish that my public duty shall not cease

with my representative capacity. In that idea I entirely concur. My seat in Parliament was but a part of my situation; my relation to my country was higher and more permanent—the duty of a citizen is commensurate with his powers of body and mind.

"I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, your most humble servant, "H. GRATTAN."

The military measures of the Government were now coming into operation, and were carried to such extremes, that men left the service in disgust. Lord Bellamont had retired from the command of the Cavan militia, owing to his not approving of General Lake's proclamation. The Duke of Leinster now gave up the command of the Kildare militia; his brother, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, retired from the representation of the city of Dublin; and Mr. Grattan, who had joined a yeomanry corps, also sent in his resignation; his health having suffered, and his mind worn by politics, he retired to Castle Connell, a watering place, in the county of Limerick, on the borders of the Shannon, famed for the salubrity of its waters: prior to this, he addressed "*A Letter to his Fellow Citizens*,"* that excited a considerable sensation, and drew upon him the anger and attack of the Government party. It forms almost an epitome of Irish history, and is remarkable for its ability, its spirit, and its constitutional principles. Many persons, however, disapproved of its appearing at such a crisis, and, though replete with sound doctrine and sage advice, yet in the agitated state of the public mind, it was considered injudicious to publish to the nation such a detail of national grievance and ministerial delinquencies; the danger, however, did not come from the statement of the grievance, but from the evils that caused it; and it must be remembered that the opposition party had been

* Grattan's Miscellaneous Works, vol. v. p. 40.

greatly provoked and abused in the extreme, charged with every bad intention, and every deed and word short of high treason.—Curran had been driven from Chancery by one judge,* and censured for being counsel to the United Irish by another;† so that their opponents had entirely disentitled themselves to any lenity or forbearance. But whatever may have been the criticism of the times, such nice distinctions will be unknown in the records of its history;—the production will live not only on account of its talent, but its truth. To the Irish minister it will ever remain a bitter reproach,—of the memory of Mr. Pitt the severest, because the justest condemnation. The concluding passage is the only one that is here introduced:—

"Self-legislation is life, and has been sought for, as for being. It was that principle that called forth resistance to the House of Stuart, and baptized with royalty the House of Hanover, when the people stood sponsors for their allegiance to the liberty of the subject; for Kings are but satellites, and your freedom is the luminary that has called them to the skies. It was with a view therefore to restore liberty, and with a view also to secure and immortalize royalty, by restoring to the people self-legislation, we proposed reform. A principle of attraction about which the King and people would spin on quietly and insensibly in regular movements, and in a system common to them both. 'No—no—no—the half-million,' said the Minister, 'that is my principle of attraction. Among the rich, I send my half-million, and I dispatch my coercion among the people.' His devil went forth—he destroyed liberty and property—he consumed the press—he burned houses and villages—he murdered, and he failed. 'Recal your murderer,' we said, 'and in his place dispatch our messenger—try conciliation. You have declared you wish the people should rebel, to which we answer, God forbid!—rather let them weary the royal ear with petitions, and let the dove be again sent to the King; it may bring back the olive—and as to you, thou mad Minister! who pour in regiment after regiment to dragoon

* Lord Clare. † Carleton. See ante, Vol. III. p. 422.

the Irish, because you have forfeited their affections, we beseech, we supplicate, we admonish,—reconcile the people —combat revolution by reform—let blood be your last experiment.' Combat the spirit of democracy by the spirit of liberty—the wild spirit of democratic liberty by the regulated spirit of organized liberty, such as may be found in a limited monarchy with a free Parliament; but how accomplish that but by reforming the present Parliament, whose narrow and contracted formation in both countries excludes popular representation—*i. e.* excludes self-legislation—*i. e.* excludes liberty, and whose fatal compliances, the result of that defective representation, have caused, or countenanced, or sanctioned, or suffered for a course of years, a succession of measures which have collected upon us such an accumulation of calamity—and which have finally at an immense expence, and through a sea of blood, stranded these kingdoms on a solitary shore, naked of empire, naked of liberty, and naked of innocence, to ponder on an abyss which has swallowed up one part of their fortunes, and yawns for the remainder.

"May the Kingly power, that forms one estate in our constitution, continue for ever; but let it be as it professes to be, and as by the principles and laws of these countries, it should be, one estate only—and not a power constituting one estate, creating another, and influencing a third.

"May the Parliamentary constitution prosper; but let it be an operative, independent, and integral part of the constitution, advising, confining, and sometimes directing, the Kingly power.

"May the House of Commons flourish; but let the people be the sole author of its existence, as they should be the great object of its care.

"May the connexion with Great Britain continue; but let the result of that connexion be, the perfect freedom, in the fairest and fullest sense, of all descriptions of men, without distinction of religion.

"To this purpose we spoke—and speaking this to no purpose, withdrew. It now remains to add this supplication:—However it may please the Almighty to dispose of Princes, or of Parliaments—MAY THE LIBERTIES OF THE PEOPLE BE IMMORTAL!

"HENRY GRATTAN."

The disorders and the misfortunes of the country were greatly increased by the character and tone of the Irish Government, composed of men violent, prejudiced, and intemperate: the principal of these was Lord Clare, who seemed not to possess the power of keeping his temper under any controul whatsoever, but allowed it to grow overbearing and petulant in the extreme; accompanying it with an insulting style and address, so that his passions seemed to get the complete mastery of his understanding, and his judgment ceased to direct or influence. At the opening of the session he had begun with a violent attack on the leaders of the Opposition, and on the great measures that had been obtained for the country: he went through their history from 1778 to 1797, denouncing the friends of the country as enemies to all well-regulated Government: to the connexion between the two countries, and attributing to them and to their speeches, the demands put forward by the Catholics, and the discontent that prevailed among the people.

This style being quickly imitated, proved to be of great disservice, and very injurious, not merely to the gravity of debate, but to the tone and temper that should regulate the proceedings of a deliberative assembly; and above all, when such grave affairs distracted the country.

The first victim of his anger was Lord Aldborough:—he had disapproved of some parts of the address at the opening of the session, in consequence of which Lord Clare fell upon him with bitter scorn, and relentless rage. The former replied with becoming spirit, but introduced much extraneous matter relating to a cause in court, in which he was interested, and on which the Chancellor had decided, in his opinion, partially and unjustly. This speech Lord Aldborough published; it was

represented to the House by Lord Clare, as libellous; the Lords directed the Attorney-General to prosecute Lord Aldborough, and he was subsequently tried,* found guilty, and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, and a fine of one thousand pounds.

Lord Clare's attack upon the proceedings of 1782, and upon those men who upheld the interests of the country, and the rights of the people, was not, however, equally successful. Mr. Grattan took a prompt opportunity of defending them,—a step indispensably necessary, as the leaders of the Opposition were now so assailed, that they would have soon ceased to be respected, if these repeated attacks by the Government party had been suffered to pass without reprehension. Accordingly, on the debate on the Channel trade, *he* alluded to the conduct which had been adopted towards his friends, which he vindicated from the aspersions cast upon them, defending the measures of 1782, and the subsequent efforts that were made on behalf of the rights of the country. He concluded as follows:—

"It is not opposition, nor the language of opposition, nor public injury; but it is insult added to injury; it is both the injury and the insult, inflamed by a feverish and idle tongue, and by the public nuisance of gross, petulant, and offensive manners. These are the circumstances that irritated the people,—*the little penknife of the implacable pleader and his dirty quill, mangling his country's character, and her wounds, are best calculated to make her frantic.*

* * * *

"Against such charges and statements, I beg to enter my protest, as opprobrious and pusillanimous, as arraigning past concessions, as tending to prevent future ones, betraying the fair pretensions of the country, disparaging for seventeen years back, without distinction, all her exertions; as fraught with charges against the public and the

* Mr. Downes, afterwards Chief Justice, who tried the Catholic delegates in 1812, presided at this trial.

individuals demonstratively false, and introduced with a lurking and dirty view, to flatter a British court at the expence of the Irish character, and conveyed in an unmannered strain of feminine intemperance."

It may, however, be questioned, on the whole, whether Lord Clare was not mismanaged, and whether it would not have been better to have left him to himself. Mr. Pitt would have soon grown tired both of him and his party, and have treated them before the Union, as he did after it, with neglect. He did not approve of his measures; for when Mr. Sheridan made a motion* in the British House of Commons respecting Ireland, Mr. Pitt's friend (George Canning) went across the House, *and told him that Pitt disapproved of the proceedings of Lord Clare as much as he (Sheridan) did*, but shaped, as the motion was, that Mr. Pitt could not support it. Unfortunately, the United Irishmen set him up, by their violence and illegal conduct, and gave him the victory. If they had not joined the French against England, Mr. Pitt would not have joined Lord Clare against them; but when he found that they proceeded to treason, he abandoned them. Their error was in joining with France: had it not been for this, they would have succeeded; but when Pitt found that they abandoned England for France, he abandoned them to Lord Clare. It would have been a wiser course for the Opposition to have protested equally against him and against the United Irishmen; they could have been moderate, but firm, and would have shown more prudence if they had been less violent. They should have stated, that they would support Government if they acted mildly; if not, that they would retire. But politicians, in the heat of action, cannot become philosophers; and, certainly, they had every reason to be

* Motion on supply, 1797.

angry, for they had been ill treated, grossly deceived, and greatly abused. The people had a very strong case, but, unfortunately, they did not know how to state it, and were ignorant of their own strength. If they had been satisfied with remonstrance and passive resistance, they would have prevailed; so that, on the whole, it is difficult to say which party acted worse:—the Government acted ill, and the United Men, who enabled that Government to take away their liberty, acted equally so. The Clare party if controlled would have been better than the insurgent party: the latter, if they succeeded, would have cut each other's throats; for the slave and the tyrant are closely allied; and, perhaps, in a question between two ills,—the courtier of the crown and the courtier of the people,—the latter will be found the least preferable: his measures are not so bad, but his principles are infinitely worse.

The following letters are not devoid of interest. Doctor Haliday was the friend of Lord Charlemont, his admirer, his supporter, his correspondent,—a man of letters, of science, and of taste,—strongly attached to liberty, to the principles of the Constitution, and the interests of his country. He had met Lord Camden's father in 1782. At a great period of Irish history, he had met that distinguished individual; he had accompanied him to the reviews of the Volunteers in the north; he had heard their conduct admired and extolled by that constitutional character, and he now strove to excite in the mind of his son a sentiment of regard towards the country that had been praised by the father, or, at least, to awaken in his bosom some feelings of humanity. He was well acquainted with the disposition of his countrymen; he knew the results that would follow from General Lake's proclamation, and the horrors inseparable from

military government. He strove to soften the Lord Lieutenant, and addressed to him the following mild, sensible, and manly letter; but it produced no good—it was heeded not—*it was felt not* *—

Mens immota manet, lachrymæ volvuntur inanes!

MR. HALIDAY TO LORD CAMDEN.

My dear Lord Camden;—Inexpressibly obliged to your Lordship for your favour and condescension so repeatedly experienced, I feel it my duty, however averse from giving your Lordship trouble, to trespass on your goodness. In the letter your Lordship lately honoured me with, you seem to think the harsh measures pursuing in the proscribed North, and which you would gladly have avoided, if not necessary, are lenient compared with those its inhabitants merit. My Lord, I am an old man, perfectly acquainted with this my native town and country for half a century; and as I was very early admitted into the society of the aged, I may safely say, for a whole one; during which both have been noted for a warm attachment to the constitution, to the Revolution, to the succession in the House of Brunswick, and to all the monarchs who have filled the throne since the Revolution, excepting Queen Anne, during the last four high-flying years of her reign, when the Whigs, by much the most numerous and respectable part of the people, were insulted and kept down by a contemptible Tory party, aided by the strong hand of Government, and a debased and unprincipled magistracy. The people in these parts are a reading and a thinking people, pretty generally acquainted with the history of these nations—with the principles of the Constitution—with the writings of Sydney, Locke, Hoadley, &c. When, in the year —15, a rebellion broke out in Scotland, this town was the first in the kingdom to arm in support of a beloved king and family: in the year – 45, when the last rebellion raged from that now favoured country to the heart of England, the inhabitants formed themselves into three companies, of one hundred men each, and upwards, well armed, well disciplined, and clothed in their respective uniforms, all at their own expense; and at the request of Government, although unaided by it, garrisoned Carrickfergus for ten days, that is, till the danger of a descent was over. What unanimity, zeal, and courage, did not the inhabitants of

* See Moore, 2d vol., as to his treatment of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

these proscribed counties display on the landing of the French, under Flobert, in the year – 60! Mr. Pitt* was the Minister, and never was one more admired, indeed adored, nor could any man be more respected and beloved than his excellent friend, your father, was, by us. It wrings my heart to behold the alteration in the state of things here, in this year – 97, from what it was in the year – 59, when nothing but cheerful countenances was to be met with, nothing but exultation for interesting victories, rapidly successive, to be heard, while unreserved mutual confidence universally prevailed. What a total and sad reverse do we now witness! Whence has this deplorable change originated?—The problem is of easy solution, or, to speak with more precision, the question is not problematic. I may venture to give a negative answer to it,—surely not from the people. The signal and unbought services of our old Volunteers, who proved at once a wall of defence for their threatened, and by Government, abandoned country, and effectual conservators of internal peace, of law, and of order, are of such recent date, and so universally acknowledged, that I should not have mentioned them, but as an introduction to a little anecdote. At the great review of these national guardians, having the honour to walk with your illustrious father along the front of one of the brigades, he said to me, "*Haliday, I should not have believed this, had I not seen it,—it is a glorious exhibition, but remember what I tell you; keep it up, for, depend upon it, England considers it an insult, and will, when she can, make you feel that she does so.*" By what I have honestly and truly mentioned above, your Lordship may be led to conclude that the inhabitants of these parts possess a general and competent knowledge of, and attachment to, the doctrines of civil and religious liberty; of course they could not contemplate with unconcern the very imperfect state of the representation—they were confirmed in their conviction of the necessity of some reform, by its being so forcibly impressed upon the public mind, by their idol, the great Lord Chatham; by that first of constitutional lawyers—your excellent and venerated father; by the present Minister, before he became such, and by many of the able and illustrious characters in both kingdoms, whom they looked up to as the wisest and best friends of the constitution, and of the empire; by the unqualified declarations, and zealous efforts

* Lord Chatham.

of most respectable delegates in the Convention of Dungannon and Dublin; and by the admission on both sides of our House of Commons, in the year '93 (I think it was), that Reform in the representation was indispensable. And they certainly beheld with equal concern and indignation their expectations respecting it disappointed by some in power, who had formerly cherished and encouraged them; while the necessity for the measure was rendered still more forcibly striking and urgent, by an extended system of corruption, established and *avowed*,* and which went the length of setting the peerage to sale, for the express purpose of still further contaminating and debasing the popular branch of the legislature. It was then generally concluded that Ireland could never speak out with effect, while the nation remained so unfortunately divided; and hence arose the project of uniting the people of every religious persuasion, of forming societies of United Irishmen, from which I and most others of our principal inhabitants, of much greater celebrity, kept aloof, judging that the overcoming at once the inveterate religious prejudices, or extinguishing at once animosities excited by deep injuries, reciprocally inflicted by contending sects, however much to be wished, was not to be hoped for. We had likewise thought the Catholics, who had been miserably neglected on the important article of education, had not attained to that degree of information and liberality of mind, which should have preceded their free and full admission within the pale of the Constitution; and, therefore, that this should be opened to them gradually. Finally, and above all, we disapproved of the members being bound together by an oath; yet I am convinced that the previous and sole object of their associations was, the letting into the franchise of the constitution three-fourths of the population of Ireland, who had for a long series of years been excluded from it, in the hopes that the voice of the people might, in consequence, become more energetic and efficacious.

We afterwards saw, with deep concern, this kind of union embracing in its spread the very lowest classes of the people, who, not understanding or entering into its original views and purposes, took up far different ones, unwarrantable, and threatening confusion, with all its incalculable consequences. *Would to Heaven, my Lord, that something conciliatory had early been attempted, instead of those exaspe-*

* Mr. Fitzgibbon's speeches, 1789.

rating measures which have been progressively pursued both in and out of Parliament, and which some think have scarcely left a feature of the Constitution discernible! Whether any thing in the way which I know would be congenial to your Lordship's feelings, would now do, I cannot pretend to say; but *humanity,—justice, which is always the soundest policy,—magnanimity, seem all to plead for the trial;*—THE ALTERNATIVE IS TOO HORRIBLE TO THINK OF! One word more—the stop to the circulation of cash must add infinitely to the general distress, confusion, and danger. Our manufacturers are thrown idle—they cannot starve, and are not suffered to emigrate in search of the means of living in other countries; nor, were they permitted, have they the means of doing it. Forgive me, my Lord, for the great freedom I have taken,—stimulated to it by an old and warm attachment to my native town and country, and a most anxious wish for the peace and prosperity, reputation, and happiness of Ireland, and the whole British empire.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, with all due respect for your elevated rank, with the highest esteem for your character, and with gratitude for your kindness and condescension, Your most faithful and obliged Servant,

ALEXANDER HALIDAY.

Your Excellency will perceive by the date of the enclosed, that it has lain many days by me; the truth is, that with all my esteem for your Excellency's candour and goodness, I was fearful of incurring the censure of presumption and impertinence.

"Vincet amor patriæ et nos amori cedamus."

These three first words put me in mind of the Volunteers.

"Dat jura per populos, vimque affectat Olympo."

which the great Lord Chatham, in a speech, during the American war, quoted from Virgil, as not only the greatest poet, but the best politician of antiquity; nor did that truly great man disdain, on the same occasion, to repeat in the House of Commons (or Lords) from a burletta song—

"Be to her virtues very kind;
Be to her faults a little blind,
And hang the padlock on the mind."

Belfast, March 29, 1797.

MR. FOX TO MR. GRATTAN.

South-street, April 7, 1797.

DEAR SIR,—I did not answer your letters which I received some months ago, for some time, because not

having made up my mind whether I should move any thing upon the affairs of Ireland, I wished not to write till I had come to a decision; and since that period I have really scarce had a moment to myself; at all events, I hope you will attribute my silence to any other motive rather than to a want of thankfulness for your kind communications, or of personal regard and attention to yourself.

If the newspapers have given a tolerably fair account of my speech upon the affairs of Ireland, you will doubtless have remarked, that I have proceeded principally upon the facts and arguments with which you furnished me. The answer to me was, as I expected, chiefly grounded upon the impropriety of our interference with your *independent* Legislature; and I observe, by the newspapers, that this topic is to be brought forward in Dublin, for the purpose of making me unpopular on your side of the channel. I am sure even the Parliament of Ireland can have no right to complain of me upon this subject, when I put the case (as I did) upon the fact of perfect reciprocity; for I contended, and do contend, that if Great Britain were in such a disturbed state as that a considerable portion of it (Yorkshire, for instance) was put by the Government out of the King's peace, or even if things were in such a state as to threaten such a calamity, I say in such a case it would be justifiable and creditable in your Parliament to address the King to adopt *lenient councils*, &c.; and how much more so if you saw that he was likely to call upon you for men and money to subdue his British subjects. I am sure I need use no further arguments upon a subject upon which I believe our opinions are exactly alike; but as I see Mr. Ogle and Dr. Duigenan mean to make a violent attack upon this business, I should wish to know, that what I have done, is at least not disapproved of by the minority of the Irish House of Commons, and this not so much for my own private satisfaction, as because I think it material for the public interest, that the two Ministers should act in the affairs of Ireland upon similar principles, although I confess I have little hope of either, or both of them jointly, being able to effect any good, or prevent the absolute ruin of the two countries.

If there is any measure more likely than another to give us a chance of salvation, I think it would be a general expression, on the part of the people of Ireland, of their wish for the removal of Ministers, or perhaps of Pitt

personally, as a first step to reform of abuses. I am sure you are of too liberal a nature to attribute my opinion on this point to motives either of ambition or resentment. The truth is, that without a change of Ministry no good can be done, either with you or with us:—without it we cannot have peace: you cannot have reform; nor real independence; and I see enough of the state of things here to be persuaded that no change will take place without a determined expression of the sense of the people. Whether even *that* will do, I doubt; but the petitions here would certainly acquire considerable additional weight from being backed by the wishes of the people of Ireland.

However, whether such measures as I point out be or be not practicable in Ireland, you must be a better judge than I; and to your judgment, and to that of others who think with you, in this instance I implicitly defer;—at all events, I think it is a time in which inactivity on either side of the channel is nearly criminal. Ruin almost certain is coming on, and when it arrives, it will be a miserable excuse for having done nothing to prevent it, that we thought we could do no good.

I have gone farther upon this subject than I intended; but the dreadful view I have of public affairs is such, that when I am writing to, or conversing with a person, whom I think capable of comprehending the real magnitude of the objects before us, I hardly know when to leave off.

I really think that the existence of the funded property of England, *and the connexion between our two countries, depend upon the measures to be taken in a few, in a very few months.*

I am, with great regard, dear Sir, yours ever,

C. J. Fox.

Lord Camden had conferred the bishoprick of Waterford on Mr. Grattan's uncle (Richard Marley.) He had in him a warm supporter, anxious for the success of his administration. He was desirous to soften the opposition of his nephew, and he wrote to him without reserve; but although he differed from Mr. Grattan in politics, his affection remained unchanged. Mr. Grattan's reply shows the goodness of his heart, and his rec-

titude in upholding principles which he considered to be right, even at the risk of losing the friendship of a relation he so highly valued :—

THE BISHOP OF WATERFORD TO MR. GRATTAN.

Jervis-street, 14th May, 1797.

My dear Harry,—Before we settle in the country, I wish we could settle the business of Anne's fortune.*

I have read the report of the secret committee : its truth cannot be doubted.

The leaders of your party, who do not in the most public manner speak their abhorrence of the United Irishmen, and their plans, must be thought cowards that fear them, or traitors who wish them success, and would wade through blood to get into power. Such is my opinion, and such the opinion of all, who are not the slaves and tools of party, and the friends of riot and murder.

I speak most disinterestedly on the subject: you must be convinced how sincerely I wish your happiness, and how anxious I am that *your* character may not be thought like the characters of *those* with whom you often live.

You have excellent parts,—and most uncommon application,—in judgment you never err,—your honesty never fails. I hope I shall never see you tormented with power.

Your enemies say your ambition is restless and childish —I hope it may be disappointed for *your* sake, and that Popery may not be established and Christianity destroyed by popish art, zeal, and tyranny. I am not vain enough to suppose, that any thing that I can say can change your opinion ; I write, I confess, to vent my feelings, and to assure you, I must be your very affectionate †

R. Waterford.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE BISHOP OF WATERFORD.

17*th May*, 1797.

My dear Uncle;—Anne's business we will settle when you please.

I love you for your advice ; it was, however, impossible

* A connexion of the Bishop's.

† When he was dying, he desired that his property should be left solely to Mr. Grattan ; but the latter, with that disinterestedness that always marked his character in money matters, insisted that it should be divided among his relations, and in consequence Mr. Grattan got one-fourth instead of the entire.

for us to concur in the address on the report, because that address contained *unqualified approbation of the system of coercion, with unqualified exhortation to pursue it.* As far as a temperate manner of repeating my real opinions, perhaps errors, your advice certainly had its influence. When you wish that I may not be tormented with power, I am convinced you are my friend, and in that wish, I believe you will succeed. You over-rate my industry, and my talents; but then you think you restore the balance of justice when you mention the errors of my judgment. You are mistaken, believe me; I have committed more errors in judgment than ever you charge me with; and it is your partiality that sees so few, and not your prejudice that sees so many. There is one error of judgment which I shall never commit, and against which my head, as well as my heart protects me—I shall never cease to love, respect, and admire you. Yours ever, H. GRATTAN.

When Mr. Grattan found that the Irish Government proceeded to such violent measures, that the people were almost handed over to the military; and that he might be called to act against them, and in a manner inconsistent with his duty and feelings as a man of humanity and a freeman, he determined no longer to remain in the yeomanry corps, which on their formation he had joined as a private; and, accordingly, he sent in his resignation, and addressed this letter to his commanding officer:—

MR. GRATTAN TO CAPTAIN (AFTERWARDS LORD) MONCK, COMMANDING THE POWERSCOURT CAVALRY.*

May, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR;—It gives me great concern that the late determination of Government, with respect to the people of Ireland, should have been against measures of conciliation, and for measures of coercion and force. Such a determination makes it impossible for me to hold any military situation, however insignificant, under a government so disposed. *If ever I am sent into actual service, it shall never be against my country.*

I have a very high opinion of our corps, and its officers,

* See the account of this Corps—Holt's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 292.

and a love for both. I, therefore, take my leave with much affection and regret. And am, dear sir, yours very truly,

H. GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Castle Connell, 1797.

DR. M'CAN;—I got your letter of the 18th full time enough. I find myself better; however, my stomach strengthens but slowly—still it gets strength—the weather begins to improve—it has been intolerable. *I read the accounts of executions, and convictions.** 'Tis a melan-

* The case that excited the strongest sympathy was that of William Orr, a respectable farmer in the north of Ireland, brother to a lawyer of that name. *He had been in prison for upwards of a year,* and at length was brought to trial, charged by a soldier of the Scotch Fencibles with administering to him the United Irishmen's oath. This man's testimony was impeached on the ground of character; and Mr. Curran stated that a subsequent enquiry disclosed the infamous life and reputation of this informer. The jury *deliberated for thirteen hours,* and at length found him guilty, but *with a recommendation to mercy.* Two jurors deposed before Baron Yelverton (who tried the case along with Judge Chamberlane) that *whisky had been brought into the jury-box, and administered to the jurors—and that some of them were under the influence of liquor when they found their verdict;* another swore that he was induced to find the prisoner guilty *on the assurance by some of the jurors, that the Government would not execute him.* His brother, anxious to save him, forged his name to a confession of guilt, on the understanding that some of the leading gentry of the county of Antrim would apply to Government in his favour; but they subsequently declined. The judge submitted to the Lord lieutenant the recommendations for mercy. The prisoner was three times reprieved! The witness Wheatly *declared that what he had sworn against him was false;* but yet *Lord Camden was inexorable,* and at the end of a month the unfortunate man was executed. He had indignantly refused to declare he was guilty, and died, protesting his innocence.

Lord Camden was greatly blamed. "*Remember Orr!—Remember Orr!*" were words written every where — pronounced every where. I recollect, when a child, to have read them on the walls—to have heard them spoken by the people. Fortunately I did not comprehend their meaning. The conduct of the Irish executive was so reprobated, that at a public dinner in London, given in honour of Mr. Fox's birth-day, in one of the rooms where the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Oxford, Mr. Erskine, Sir Francis Burdett, and Horne Tooke were, two of the toasts were —"*The memory of Orr—basely* M—D—D. *May the execution of Orr provide places for the Cabinet of St. James's at the Castle!*"

In consequence of a publication on this subject, and signed *Marcus,* which appeared in the "*Press,*" a newspaper set up by Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Finnerty, the printer, was in December, 1797, convicted of a libel. Mr. Curran, on that occasion, made one of his able and eloquent displays. His description of an informer, already mentioned, (page 160,) was unrivalled. I have heard that Mr. Fox admired it par-

choly reflection, so much spilling of blood—guilty or innocent. I don't believe you will have peace. I have not seen the paper since the 14th. I send to-day to Limerick, and shall get them,—they come now regularly.

Mrs. Grattan is very well, and has received great benefit from the waters.

You will have, I believe, no peace. I read part of the pamphlet—it is no great thing—it labours and labours to make out a paradox. Yours ever, H. GRATTAN.

ticularly. An extract of what he addressed to the jury is worthy of a place in any history.

"Let me beg of you to suppose, that any one of you had been the writer of this very severe expostulation with the Viceroy, and that you had been the witness of the whole progress of this never-to-be-forgotten catastrophe. Let me suppose that you had known the charge upon which Mr. Orr was apprehended, the charge of abjuring that bigotry which had torn and disgraced his country, of pledging himself to restore the people of his country to their place in the constitution, and of binding himself never to be the betrayer of his fellow-labourers in that enterprise; that you had seen him, upon that charge, removed from his industry, and confined to a jail; that through the slow and lingering progress of twelve tedious months you had seen him confined in a dungeon, shut out from the common use of air and of his own limbs; that day after day you had marked the unhappy captive, cheered by no sound but the cries of his family, or the clinking of chains; that you had seen him at last brought to his trial; that you had seen the vile and perjured informer deposing against his life; that you had seen *the drunken, and worn out, and terrified jury* give in a verdict of death; that you had seen the same jury, when *their returning sobriety brought back their consciences, prostrate themselves before the humanity of the bench,* and pray that the mercy of the crown might save their characters from the reproach of an involuntary crime, their consciences from the torture of eternal self-condemnation, and their souls from the indelible stain of innocent blood. Let me suppose that you had seen the respite given, and that contrite and honest recommendation transmitted to that seat where mercy was presumed to dwell; *that new and before unheard-of crimes are discovered against the informer;* that the royal mercy seems to relent, and that a new respite is sent to the prisoner; that time is taken, as the learned counsel for the crown expressed it, to see whether mercy could be extended or not; that after the period of lingering deliberation had passed, a third respite is transmitted; that the unhappy captive himself feels the cheering hope of being restored to a family that he has adored, to a character that he had never stained, and to a country that he had ever loved; that you had seen his wife and children upon their knees, giving those tears to gratitude, which their locked and frozen hearts could not give to anguish and despair, and imploring the blessings of Eternal Providence upon his head who had graciously spared the father, and restored him to his children; that you have seen the olive-branch sent into his little ark—but no sign that the waters had subsided. "Alas! nor wife, nor children more shall he behold, nor friends nor sacred home!" No seraph in mercy unbars his dungeon, and leads

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Limerick, 27th Sept. 1797.

DEAR M'CAN,—I wrote, by a private hand, a letter which I suppose you got on Sunday or Monday—it mentioned that I got your draft. I told you there would be no peace. How do we stand as to revenue? Is there to be a meeting of Parliament? I tremble at the state of things—here, however, I find quiet and health—the State cannot say so much. The waters have done me so much good, and Mrs. Grattan also, that I shall stay for ten days longer, perhaps a fortnight.

him forth to light and life—but the minister of death hurries him to the scene of suffering and shame—where, unmoved by the hostile array of artillery and armed men collected together, to secure or to insult, or to disturb him, he dies with a solemn declaration of his innocence, and utters his last breath in a prayer for the liberty of his country. Let me now ask you, if any of you had addressed the public ear upon so foul and monstrous a subject, in what language would you have conveyed the feelings of horror and indignation? Would you have stooped to the meanness of qualified complaint? Would you have been mean enough——but I entreat your forgiveness; I do not think meanly of you; had I thought so meanly of you, I would not suffer my mind to commune with you as it has done; had I thought you that base and vile instrument, attuned by hope and by fear, into discord and falsehood, whose vulgar string no groan of suffering could vibrate, no voice of integrity or honour could speak,—let me honestly tell you, I should have scorned to fling my hand across it; I should have left it to a fitter minstrel. * * * * *

"Gentlemen of the Jury,—If you think that the man who ventures at the hazard of his own life, to rescue from the deep the drowned honour of his country, must not presume upon the guilty familiarity of plucking it up by the locks, I have no more to say. Do a courteous thing. Upright and honest jurors! find a civil and obliging verdict against the printer! and when you have done so, march through the ranks of your fellow-citizens to your own homes, and bear their looks as you pass along! Retire to the bosom of your families and your children, and when you are presiding over the morality of the parental board, tell those infants, who are to be the future men of Ireland, the history of this day. Form their young minds by your precepts, and confirm those precepts by your own example; teach them how discreetly *allegiance may be perjured on the table, or loyalty be forsworn in the jury-box; and when you have done so, tell them the story of Orr*—tell them of his captivity, of his children, of his crime, of his hopes, of his disappointments, of his courage, and of his death: and when you find your little hearers hanging from your lips, when you see their eyes overflow with sympathy and sorrow, and their young hearts bursting with the pangs of anticipated orphanage, tell them that you had the boldness and the justice to stigmatize the monster who had dared to publish the transaction!!!"

If you happen to see Mr. Peter Burrowes,* mention me to him in the warmest manner—I have a very high opinion of him.

I got the books, and I thank you. Is it possible that Sheridan could have written the strange attack on me?—Alas!—I speak from what I hear, for I never read these attacks—that would be endless labour—I find that I know men but little. Yours ever, H. GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Castleconnell, Oct. 3, 1797.

DEAR M'CAN,—I shall see you in the course of a fortnight. You see stocks look down—rely on it they will be lower—we shall be eaten up with armies. The conduct of Government regarding Ireland, depend on it, gives confidence to France, and is an additional obstacle to peace. How is Curran? I am much better. War—war—you see war, and this country made the theatre of it. *There was a moment when all this could have been prevented.* I am sorry our quondam friend Charles† has acted by you so pitifully. I should never have thought it; but I don't know men. God bless you!—Yours, H. GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Castleconnell, October 11, 1797.

MY DEAR M'CAN,—I got a letter this moment from one of our children—that the Orange boys have got up in our country near us.‡ Probably 'tis a vague report; but

* One of Mr. Grattan's warmest and most attached friends. He sat in Parliament at the Union, and gave that measure every opposition. His speech at the bar in 1812, on the trial of the Catholic Delegates, in answer to the Attorney-general (Mr. Saurin), was a masterpiece of legal ability. Sir Arthur Piggott, (the English Attorney-general of 1806,) a great authority, assured me that it was unanswered and unanswerable. He expired in London, at a very advanced age, (upwards of 90,) in 1841.

† Charles Sheridan:—this regards some private transactions.

‡ The Roman Catholics were apprehensive of being attacked by the Orangemen, and they assembled in great numbers between Bray and Arklow, to defend themselves. The yeomanry were, for the most part, an exclusive corps, which widened the breach between the parties; and in addition the houses burned were chiefly those of the Catholics. The circumstance here referred to I cannot now forget. The serjeant of the Powerscourt Yeomanry was clerk of the parish, and schoolmaster. He used to teach me to write; and coming one morning rather late, he made an apology to the French tutor (Mativet), saying, he had been out most of the night with his corps, and that they had burned a man's house not

if true, I wish the children were sent to Mrs. Bermingham's* till our return. Be so good as to enquire from Mr. Mativet† about this report as soon as you receive this letter. I shall leave Castleconnell on Saturday, and go to Sir John Tydd's for three days; so stop my letters and paper, and direct to me, under cover, to him.—Yours,

HENRY GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. MR. BERWICK.

26th October, 1797.

TO MY DEAR BERWICK, health and happiness!—I will go to see you when Mrs. G. will permit; but I will certainly go. I wish you joy—am happy at the safety of your lady, Madam Anne. I hope the boy‡ will not be seized by an active magistrate, as a United Irishman. The magistracy have done as extraordinary things.

I will go to Lord Pery,§ when I go to you. Your letter I got yesterday; it went to Tinnehinch—I was not there; it went to Clare—I was not there;—a gentleman found

far from Tinnehinch. They approached it in the dead of the night. One of the party discharged his musket in the thatch, and set the house on fire. I persuaded the tutor to bring me to the place; and never shall I forget the dismal scene, or free my mind from the melancholy impression! I almost think I behold the smoking ruins, and the burned walls,—the little furniture partly consumed—wholly destroyed. Terror seemed to reign around. The few who dared to look, feared to speak; it was a scene of woe and desolation—"*a death-like silence, and a dread repose.*" The poor peasant had fled—he and his family were driven amidst the flames upon the wide world—naked—penniless; his property destroyed—his character blasted—an outcast—an outlaw—branded as a traitor—*and for no earthly reason whatever; but some one chose to suspect him—that sufficed.* At this period no insurrection had broken out; but acts such as these were the cause of it: and when men affect to be surprised that the Irish should have revolted, the only wonder is, that when such tyranny and cruelty forced them to draw their swords, they had not courage to sheath them in the heart of the Minister!

Holt (a Protestant, in the county of Wicklow), was similarly treated. His house was burned by a gentleman whose family is well-known; and he assigns this as a reason for his taking up arms. He kept the county in a state of disturbance for a considerable period.—*Memoirs of Holt.*

* His sister-in-law, then widow of his early friend Bermingham. She resided at the Blackrock, eight miles from Tinnehinch.

† The French tutor, whose escape from being hanged by the ancient Britons will be mentioned hereafter.

‡ Her son Walter Berwick, now assistant barrister for the county of Waterford, and one of her majesty's counsel-at-law.

§ He resided at St. Edmondsbury, on the banks of the River Liffey, near Mr. Berwick's.

it on the road, in its travels, wrapped it in a frank, and I received it yesterday unopened and unviolated.

What do you think of the state of things? Pitt is more likely to depose the King of England, than restore the King of France.

I am sorry about poor Sheridan;* he was a pleasant wrangler, and has made a fool of himself by being too sad a courtier. He speaks of the people like Fitzgibbon; but little Fitz has an excuse, he has a snap by nature, and is a vinegar-merchant by profession, who throws his *aigre* flasks at the people. The other seemed to laugh at all that, and aspired to something higher.

I am sorry for his health; I am sorry for his reputation.

Yours ever, H. GRATTAN.

* He had written a pamphlet, in which he attacked Mr. Grattan.

CHAPTER X.

Lord Moira's motion in the British Parliament in favour of Ireland (Nov. 1797)—His statement of the cruelties towards the Irish people —Similar motion in the Irish parliament (February, 1798)—Lord Carhampton retires from the command of the troops in Ireland—His character—His conduct towards the Rev. Mr. Berwick—Humane disposition of the latter towards the peasantry—Cruelties practised on them—System of spies and informers decried by Lord Moira—Their confessions—Liberation of Neilson in consequence—The *Press* newspaper destroyed by the military—Curran's description of the informers —Parliament meets—Complaints of the conduct of the military—Sir Lawrence Parsons' motion for conciliation—Mr. (Lord) Plunket's speech—Sir Lawrence Parsons forced to resign the command of the militia—His letter to Lord Camden — Mr. Grattan's reasons for seceding from Parliament—His remarks on the Government, and their conduct towards the people—Knowledge by the Government of the proceedings of the United Irishmen—Lord Clonmell's statements thereon—His singular remark—Arrest of the Leinster delegates, the 12th of March—Proclamation of rebellion—History of the United Irishmen—Views, objects, and errors—The Emmett family—Anecdote of Dr. Emmett—Mr. Grattan's remarks—Characters of Temple, Thomas Addis, and Robert Emmett—Mr. Peter Burrowes' and Mr. Grattan's remarks on them—T. A. Emmett's letter from America to Mr. Peter Burrowes—Character of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—A. O'Connor, Jackson, the Sheares, and Nelson—Curran's visit to the latter in prison.

On the 22nd of November, 1797, Lord Moira, with that feeling of humanity which, in the senate as in the field, always marked his character, and of which an instance has been mentioned already, brought forward the case of Ireland in the British Parliament, and called upon Ministers to change their system, and adopt measures of conciliation. He was replied to by Lord Grenville, who denied that the cases of inhumanity were as great as had been represented, and again pleaded the independence of the Irish Parliament as a bar to any

interference on the part of England—that independence which in two years afterwards, in so flagitious a manner, he proposed to abolish! Nothing was done on the subject, and the question of adjournment was carried without a division.

Lord Moira, in observing on the state of Ireland, said, the first thing that struck him was the light in which it was now customary for the military to view an Irishman. The foreign troops that were sent to Ireland, went thither under an unfortunate prejudice which care had been taken to instil into them, that every man they met there was a rebel. Every species of insult, of menace, and oppression, was exercised upon this supposition. There was one circumstance which would give some idea of the insult to which every man was liable. He recollected, when he had read the history of this country, of the curfew, he had been accustomed to consider it as a degrading badge of servitude. This custom, however, was now established in Ireland in all its rigour. At nine o'clock every man was called upon to extinguish his candle and his fire, and the military enforced the regulation with the most insulting expressions. The hardship of this regulation was frequently felt in the most cruel manner. An instance had occurred within his knowledge, in which a party of soldiers had come to the house of a man by the road side; they insisted that he should extinguish his candle; the man entreated that he might be permitted to retain his light, because he was watching by the bedside of his child, which was subject to convulsion fits, and might every moment require assistance. The party, however, rigorously insisted that the light should be extinguished. It had been in former times the custom for the people of this country, and of their Lordships, to hold in detestation the infamous proceedings of the inquisition: one of the greatest horrors with which it was attended was, that *the person on whom it seized was torn from his family, immured in prison, ignorant of the crime laid to his charge, and of his accuser,* in the most cruel uncertainty as to the period of his confinement, and of the fate that awaited him. Yet to this injustice, so justly abhorred in the practice of the inquisition, were the people of Ireland exposed; a man was torn from his family, and exposed to the horrors of imprisonment, without know-

ing the crime of which he was accused, or being confronted with his accuser. Such proceedings were not solitary instances—they were frequent; and the man who saw his neighbour hurried from his home, could not say but to-morrow he might experience the same fate; all confidence, all security, were taken away. In alluding to the inquisition, he had omitted to mention one of its characteristic features: if the supposed culprit refused to acknowledge the crime with which he was charged, he was put to the rack, in order to extort a confession of the supposed guilt. In the same manner the proceedings of the inquisition had been introduced in Ireland; when a man was taken up, and was suspected of being guilty himself, or of concealing the guilt of others, *he was put to the torture;* the rack, indeed, was not applied, because, perhaps, it was not at hand; but torture of another species was employed. He had known, in repeated instances, men taken up on suspicion, *subjected to the punishment of picqueting, a punishment now abolished in the cavalry as too severe. He had known a man, in order to extort confession of a supposed guilt, or of the guilt of some of his neighbours, picqueted till he actually fainted! picqueted again till he fainted! picqueted a third time till he fainted!* upon mere suspicion! Nor was this the only species of torture: men had been taken and hung up *till they were half hanged,** and then threatened with the repetition of this cruel torture unless they made confession of the imputed guilt! Such proceedings were not merely particular acts of cruelty exercised by men abusing the power committed to them, but they formed a part of the system acted upon: they were notorious;—and no man could say but that he might be the next victim of the oppression and the cruelty which he saw others endure. This, however, was not all. Their Lordships, no doubt, would recollect the famous proclamation issued by a military commander in Ireland, requiring the people to give up their arms. It never was denied that this proclamation was illegal, though it might have been defended on some supposed necessity; this necessity, however, had never been established to his satisfaction. If, therefore, any reluctance was shown to comply with this demand, he confessed it was not matter of surprise to him. Men who conceived that the Constitution gave them a right to keep

* The case of a man of the name of Shaw. Lord Moira asserted it had been tried on this man more than once.

arms in their houses for their own defence, might feel some indignation when called upon to give up this right. In the execution of the order, however, the greatest cruelties had been committed. *If it was barely suspected that a person had not given up all the arms which he had, his house was burnt, and his furniture, and every other property it contained, committed to the flames.* But a particular suspicion sometimes was not thought necessary—if it was thought that any district had not given up all the arms it contained, *a party was sent out to collect the number at which it was rated; and in the execution of this order,* THIRTY *houses were sometimes burnt down in a single night.* Thus, an officer took upon him to decide the quantity of arms which were contained in a particular district; and upon the judgment thus formed, the consequences which he had described followed. *These facts he could bring evidence to their Lordships to prove.* Many cases of a similar nature he might enumerate, if it were necessary to show the nature of the system pursued. Many of the facts it was impossible that he could have seen, but many of them had come within his knowledge. He wished for nothing more sincerely than to be examined upon oath as to the state of Ireland, and to the facts which he had brought forward. He had stated them before God and his country, and was ready to strengthen them by any species of assertion by which they might be confirmed. These facts were notorious in Ireland; but they could not be made public through the newspapers, from a fear of attracting that *summary method of punishment which had been practised in the case of the Northern Star, when a party of troops, in open day, where a general's head-quarters were, had destroyed the whole of the offices and property belonging to that paper.* For this reason, the publisher of a newspaper often refused to publish authenticated accounts of such enormities, from a dread of experiencing a similar fate. It was not the legal course of proceeding which they feared—but an arbitrary interference of a military force, without the forms of justice or of law. Instead of removing the discontents which it attempted to suppress, *it had increased the number of the discontented. The number of United Irishmen, from the latest information, was extending in every part of the country.* He had been informed, and he firmly believed the information to be correct, that their numbers were now three times greater than before the Report of the Secret Committee. Such, then, had been

the consequence of the system of severity. He believed that the moment of conciliation was not past; but if the present system was not changed, he was convinced, "*that Ireland would not remain connected with this country five years longer.*" A change of system was the only chance left.

Not satisfied with his exertions in England, Lord Moira determined to renew them in Ireland, to which he was prompted not merely by a sense of duty, but by the taunts, almost the challenge, thrown out by Lord Clare, who, after the motion in the British House of Lords, had called on him, in a tone of defiance and arrogance, to make good his charges if he could in the Irish Parliament, where he would be met and answered. Accordingly, in the month of February, 1798, Lord Moira appeared in the Irish House of Lords, and reiterated his opinions and statements, said they were perfectly correct, and after a very able speech, and remonstrance with Government on their conduct, he added :—

"The time, my Lords, is not yet lost for recovering the affections of your countrymen. Can you hope that you can restore Ireland to peace by those acts of cruelty and oppression? Conciliation may be deferred; but every day that it is deferred increases the difficulty of suppressing the views of the discontented, and allaying the evils of insurrection and revolt."

He also stated :—

"That since his arrival in Ireland he had read the confession of the informers employed by Government;—confessions which were sufficient to shock every feeling of humanity, and sicken and disgust every feeling of the soul. These confessions were demonstrative of the false and aggravated statements which Government was in the habit of receiving. *I shudder to think that such wretches could find employment or protection under any Government.* Were not these things enough to urge administration to abandon its system, and by an immediate relinquishment of this intolerable severity, to exhibit contrition at its even having been introduced into this country."

He moved an address to the Lord-Lieutenant to recommend the adoption of such conciliatory measures as might allay the apprehensions and extinguish the discontents unhappily prevalent in this country. Lord Clare replied, and, as usual, gave the history of the country in an illiberal and highly coloured party-spirit. He detailed at length great atrocities committed by the people; as to the burning of houses by the military, *he said it could not be strictly justified, but some examples were necessary to be made.* As to the half-hanging a man of the name of Shaw, he *denied that anything more was done than tying the rope about his neck to induce him to confess!* He then assailed the Bishop of Down, (Dickson,) stated that he had called on the High Sheriff of his county to convene a mob of insurgents, and when refused, that he went about hunting for signatures, and affixed his name, with that of a lame beggar, in a petition to the King. The Bishop, however, was not terrified by the tone or manner of the Chancellor, and answered him with spirit and dignity, and with complete success*—declared that for his disapprobation or praise he entertained the most perfect indifference; and as to the statement of the petition, his information was unfounded. Lord Dunsany very efficiently supported Lord Moira; but the numbers were†—9 to 44 against the address.

In November, 1797, Lord Carhampton resigned the command of the army in Ireland—too late, unfortunately, for the peace of the country. By some, his resignation was ascribed to a desire on

* Lord Charlemont, in his letter to Dr. Haliday, says his reply was excellent, and Lord Clare's attack most unjustifiable.—Hardy's Memoirs, vol. ii.

† Those who voted with Lord Moira were—Charlemont, Bellamont, Arran, Kilkenny, Granard, Dunsany, Belvedere, Cloncurry, Mount Cashell, and the Bishop of Down (Dickson).

the part of Government for lenient measures, particularly as he was succeeded by Sir Ralph Abercromby;—by others it was attributed to timidity on his part, as a conspiracy had been entered into to kill him; for this, however, he prosecuted and convicted two individuals—one of them his own workman, who was executed. He was a clever man, but wholly devoid of principle; he was neither a statesman nor a warrior, though he pretended to be both. He got himself into unseemly difficulties* by his arrogance, and did not get out of them by his courage: the wicked instrument,—rather the tool of Government,—he swept away the people wherever he found them; and in every possible manner levelled all ranks and degrees before him—both judge and jury, and set Ireland and her Constitution at defiance. He imprisoned, he condemned, he transported, without trial, without judge, without jury, without law, and without authority. He did those acts, for which, in any other country but Ireland, he would have lost his head; and the justest description that can be given of his progress through the provinces of Ireland, is that which Sheridan gave of the march of Hastings in India, from Oude to Benares:—"*Terror was in his front—rebellion in his rear; for wherever the heel of oppression was raised, trodden misery sprang up, and looked around for vengeance!*"

* When Isaac Corry was in opposition, he had given notice of a motion respecting some public grievance, which in consequence of his complaints was remedied, and he came to the House to get the notice discharged. Carhampton condoled with him on the loss of his grievance, and related an anecdote of the devil, who was reported to be dead, and this occasioned much grief to persons who were interested in his existence. Corry observed that he could not doubt the intelligence of the honourable member from the other world, as he had extensive dealings in that quarter, and much better knowledge of it than himself!

See his conduct to Colonel Napier, in Moore's Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, vol. ii. p. 199.

Under him the army were permitted to burn the houses,* to shoot the peasants, and exercise such license, that the troops became quite demoralised; so that the gallant Abercromby (his successor), was forced, in general orders, to declare, "*that they were formidable to every one but the enemy.*" The description that Tacitus has given of the troops of Vitellius, may be truly applied here: *Ceterum Italia gravius atque atrocius quam, bello adflictabatur, dispersi per municipia et colonias Vitelliani, spoliare,*† *rapere, vi et stupris polluere, in omne fas nefasque avidi, aut venales, non sacro, non profano abstinebant.*

When Lord Carhampton's strong measures came into operation, and the people found him act in so arbitrary a manner, there was not, in a fortnight after, almost one shopkeeper in Dublin who was not regularly sworn, and had not taken the oath of the United Irishmen. He was in fact their agent and recruiting serjeant.

His conduct to the Reverend Mr. Berwick will be best understood by detailing it as I had it from that individual. He was the clergyman of a parish not far from Luttrelstown, where Lord Carhampton resided; and in 1797, two soldiers came to his house, and took prisoner a man in his service, to bring to the General. Mr. Berwick accompanied them. Lord Carhampton knew him, both by name and profession; but he was so insolent and haughty—his manner and voice so arrogant, that Mr. Berwick thought he would be well off if he got safe out of the house. "Well, sir, who are you?—why do you protect this man?

* Speeches of Lord Moira, Lord Dunsany, Dr. Browne, Mr. Vandeleur, Sir L. Parsons.—See also Sampson's Memoirs, American edit.

† In the case of Hevey against Sirr.—See the inimitable description by Curran of Major Sandys and Major Sirr—their robbery of a horse and a silver cup, and their forging a return to a writ of Habeas Corpus. —Curran's Speeches, 253.

Don't you know that he is a rebel?" Mr. Berwick replied, he did not; that he had only just come from Longford, and before he went, had known the man to have been a very well-conducted person. "Sir, you must have known it! Where do you live?" "At Esker," Mr. Berwick replied. "Oh! no honest man would live there! Why do you harbour rogues and rebels in your place?" Mr. Berwick said, his profession and station, as chaplain to Lord Moira, should have sufficed, as he thought, to protect him from such an imputation. "Well, sir," replied Carhampton, "you may go!" Berwick now became a marked man; and to annoy and vex him, a piece of cannon was planted in the churchyard, opposite the house, in order to batter down an old building that was covered with ivy, and that formed a pretty object from the windows; and Mr. Berwick was obliged to get an order from Dublin Castle to prevent it. In the little village of Esker, several men had been half-hanged and flogged, and pitch-caps put on their heads. A smith who lived there, had been half-hanged three times in one week. They applied to the clergyman for relief and medicine, and this humane individual supplied them as well as he could: one escaped into his haggard; two had been wounded at his gate; and by food and medicine he saved one of them. These acts of a Christian and a pastor, displeased those in authority. The triangles were affixed up close to his gate; and on Sunday, at his return from prayers, he saw a crowd in the churchyard; he got in, and beheld two men tied to a car, and some English soldiers flogging them. Berwick expostulated with the officer, who replied, "Sir, hold your tongue. We don't want to be taught our duty by you. Flog on!" One of them, an old man, asked Berwick to get him a glass of

water. Berwick told the officer that he was a clergyman—that the parish was his—that this act was horrid, within view even of his windows; and he begged to be allowed to get some water for the old man. The officer exclaimed, "No water! —go on!" and Berwick was obliged to retire. On another occasion, he found a man shot, and lying on the road near his house. Berwick went with the apothecary and a yeoman to assist him; when a Scotch officer came up, and desired them to let the man alone,—that he should die where he lay. Berwick replied, that the doctor stated the man could not live; that he was shot through the lungs, and he wished to bring him home. "No, sir; if you do, I shall make you answerable, unless I find the man here again. Mind, you shall be accountable for him." This worthy, charitable man, however, took him home, but the poor creature died.

Lord Carhampton, when informed of this good man's conduct, sent for him, and told him, he heard that he was interfering *with what was going on;* that it was shameful of him!—and that if he persevered in it *he would send him in four days on board the tender!!* Mr. Berwick now showed a proper spirit; told him his mind on the occasion, and bid him defiance. This produced some effect on Carhampton, and Berwick was no longer molested! Such was the Reverend Mr. Berwick's statement.

Humane and virtuous man,—alas! your spirit too has fled; but blessings, not curses, followed you to the grave! Your name has not been stained by crimes that must have seared even the conscience of your country's oppressors. Your acts were those of charity and of mercy—they were acceptable in the sight of Heaven, and cried not to God for vengeance! How often have I been

charmed by your converse—enlivened by your playful humour—edified and improved by your elevated and generous sentiments! Neither the tyrant of the poor, nor the sycophant of the great; but

> "Dextrous the craving fawning crowd to quit,
> And pleased to escape from flattery to wit."

When I recollect that your tears fell over the fleeting moments of Ireland's dying patriot,* how must you not have felt when you beheld the ghastly wounds of your tortured countrymen! But though, in this life, your virtue was its sole reward, ere now you have received the deserved recompense for your charitable and pious offices—the blessing that awaits the just and the good—

> "Where they alike in trembling hope repose,
> The bosom of their Father and their God."

The system of spies and informers† which, in the worst times of the Roman empire disgraced and destroyed that people, was adopted in Ireland with all its horrors, and discovered a new and frightful picture in the catalogue of her calamities. The Irish minister, accustomed to bribery within the doors of Parliament, now tried it from without; and accordingly, the vilest set of beings were kept, fed, and paid at the public expense; and very quickly, and very easily they prepared themselves to swear against the lives of their fellow-creatures. They assumed various names and dresses. Common servants were passed off as gentlemen informers;‡ bankrupts, and culprits as gentlemen and officers; and though on several occasions their perjuries were proved,

* He was with Mr. Grattan in his last illness, and expired the day after Mr. Grattan died, 5 June, 1820.

† The list Lord Moira produced was as follows: Bird, alias Smith, alias Johnson; Dutton, O'Brien, Clarke, Feris, Newell, M'Can, Collier, Cusack, Burke, M'Dermott, Maguire, Lynch, M'Gauley.

‡ Dutton was one, Cooper another, Hughes a third.

yet they still were continued in the employ of Government, and were generally known by the appellation of "*The Battalion of Testimony.*" Among these there happened to be an Englishman of the name of Bird, who passed likewise under those of Smith, and Johnson. In consequence of his information, Samuel Neilson, and Russell had been arrested, and detained in prison for eighteen months, without any charge proved against them, or any trial permitted. Kennedy, Shanahan, and others, had also been apprehended on his statement, by Lords Downshire, Westmeath, and Londonderry, aided by an attorney* of the name of Pollock, accompanied with a retinue of troops and magistrates, and a parade that terrified the neighbourhood of the north. These men had remained in gaol for seventeen months; and when their trial† approached, Bird's conscience smote him,—he left his blood-stained trade—fled from the protection and pay of Government, "*aversusque fugit fœda ministeria.*" Stung with remorse, he revealed *his* crimes, and *their* conduct. He published a letter which he had received from the Castle, addressed to him under the name of Johnson, sending him money,—saying where he was to find lodgings in Dublin, for which Mr. Cooke (the Secretary) was to pay four guineas a-week; and in his letter to Cooke, accounting for his absence from the trial, he says:

"Insurmountable obstacles presented themselves to prevent the completion of the unfortunate business, *which necessity, imperious necessity, urged me to begin;* but *when I seriously reflected on the dreadful phalanx of perjured monsters,* wallowing in riot and debauchery, *ready at a nod to sacrifice any man however innocent, who might be obnoxious,* I trembled,—I could not support the idea of having my

* See Rev. Steele Dickson's narrative, and his account of this person and *of the informer Hughes.*

† Ponsonby, Curran, Emmett, and Sampson were their counsel.

name enrolled in the annals of eternal infamy with theirs, and their well adapted Major (Sirr.) I absented myself purely for the motive above mentioned—neither applied to nor tempted by the hope of reward. I confess, my heart was never for a moment *in your cause*—a reference to my letters, though apparently *madly loyal*, will convince you of that. Should any of your myriads of spies discover me, I would be more unfortunate than in my first loss—my papers and manuscripts, curious and interesting, *are in other hands than mine!!*

He then describes the informer Newell, also in the pay of Government, who went about in a mask pointing out the persons to be arrested. He next addressed a letter to Lord Camden, stating, that against Russell and Neilson there was no charge *whatever that could be supported—that they were both in prison without even the shadow of a crime.* He importuned Lord Camden for their release, and threatened to place the documents in Lord Moira's hands. All this he disclosed to Neilson, and begins:—

"In what language can I address a gentleman I have so deeply injured. * * * Happiness has been a stranger to me since the fatal day *when poverty and something worse urged me to accept the wages of infamy*;—how these men may feel, in whose hands I have been *made an instrument of ruin*, I cannot say.

"The first gleam of happiness which for twelve months has visited my breast, has been since I have ceased to work among the number of those sanguinary monsters who are destroying the very system they are seeking to support. * * * If my utmost exertions to serve *the men I was hired to destroy* can entitle me to pardon from you, I should once more feel *myself restored to peace and happiness.*"

Newell, too, recoiled from the work in which he was employed, and wrote in the following repentant strain, to the Under-Secretary (Mr. Cooke)—

"Though I cannot deny being a villain, I hope clearly to prove *I had the honour of being made one by you.* Though you did not circulate enough of your principles to make it lasting. * * * I have no occasion now for

pistols—my bosom is what it has not been this long time, and *I thank my God for having saved me from impending ruin.*"

Bird's letter to Lord Camden led to Neilson's liberation from prison in February 1798, on condition that he should not thenceforth belong to any treasonable association; but though it procured the liberty of one man, it caused the incarceration of another. The letter appeared in the *Press* newspaper of the 20th of February; and the House of Lords immediately summoned Stockdale, the printer, to their bar, for publishing in the paper of that day an attack on one of their body. They ordered him to be imprisoned for six months, and fined 500*l.* Some members wished it to be 1000*l.*; but Lord Clare restrained their ardour—like Tiberius, when he moderated the servility of the Roman senate,—"*quanto quis illustrior, tanto magis falsi et festinantes.*" As that paper had also announced an intention to publish a letter attacking Lord Clare, a party of military entered the house of the printer, seized and carried off the impressions, and destroyed the presses and machinery. Two numbers were published notwithstanding, and were circulated with avidity: they will be found in the American edition, Number 68; the letter, "*To the Author of Coercion,*" which describes Lord Clare, is equal to any of the compositions of Junius. Moore, in his Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, mentions that he wrote in the *Press*. The paper was ably supported, but very violent, and very inflammatory.

On Lord Moira's arrival in Ireland in the preceding November, he was supplied with documents containing extraordinary and horrid disclosures*

* An affidavit was made in the King's Bench, January, 1798, by a prisoner in the Castle of Dublin, praying the court to remove him from Birmingham Tower, in order to avoid the threats held out to make him become King's evidence.

respecting the Government informers, by Bird, who offered to be examined as a witness before the House of Lords in support of his statements. The Rev. Mr. Berwick, I believe, together with Mr. Grattan, assisted in getting this intelligence. It filled thirty-two large pages, each signed by Bird, and countersigned by Mr. Grattan. From the letters that passed between Lord Moira and Mr. Sampson,* it appears that these documents passed to the hands of Mr. Sheridan; but farther than that I have been unable to trace them. Bird was subsequently followed by Government, discovered, and imprisoned; he then wrote from gaol to apprise Mr. Grattan of the attempts made to effect his destruction:—*this being discovered by the Government, Bird was loaded with irons, and sent out of the kingdom.* To the knowledge he obtained through this man, together with the suggestions from Lord Dufferin, which will be mentioned presently, may be attributed in a great degree Mr. Grattan's escape from the vengeance of his enemies. Both these persons —the one of the highest honour, and the other of the basest habits—apprised him what he might expect. Fortune, too, seemed to be on his side, and the summons to Maidstone probably saved his life. At a late period he mentioned to me the circumstance of receiving the letter from Bird; but said he took no notice of it. The danger was past; and his mind had no relish for revenge. Part of the intimation meant to be conveyed, I imagine, was, that Hughes, the spy of Government, who went to Tinnehinch with Neilson when the latter was released from gaol, had gone thither at the instance of those whom Bird calls Mr. Grattan's "*venal persecutors*," though perhaps not, as he says, "*the most celebrated.*"

* See Sampson's Memoirs.

Such were the persons employed by Government, and on whose testimony they relied. Well might Lord Moira exclaim against them with indignation; for, in their hands, what life was safe!—what character secure!!! Curran, who knew them well, for at various trials he had cross-examined them, gives the following vivid description in his celebrated speech on Orr's death. He calls them—

"Vampires who crawl out of their graves in search of human blood—*a number* of horrid miscreants who avowed upon their oaths that they had come from the very seat of Government—from the Castle, where they had been worked upon by the fear of death, and the hopes of compensation, to give evidence against their fellows; thus the *mild and wholesome councils of this government are holden over these catacombs of living death*, where the wretch that is buried a man, lies till his heart has time to fester and dissolve, and is then dug up a witness!"

On the 16th January, 1798, Parliament had met; but the opposition had seceded, and Ponsonby, Grattan, Curran, Hardy, and Fletcher were away. It had lost its authority—it had tolerated torture, sanctioned military execution, and indemnified magisterial delinquency. Lord Camden, in his speech, stated that, in the north, subordination and tranquillity had in a great degree been restored; but in the midland and southern parts of the country outrages prevailed, religious animosities were again excited, and plans of assassination concerted. The address was proposed and seconded by Lords Roden and Bective in the Lords, and by Lord Corry and Maurice Fitzgerald (Knight of Kerry) in the Commons. Doctor Arthur Browne, member for Dublin University, complained of the excesses of the military and yeomanry, and asked by what authority, act of Parliament, or proclamation, *the house of every person was burned who was not home at a*

particular hour at night?—and why another rule was adopted, namely, that of taking up men *supposed to be guilty of treasonable offences, but against whom there was no evidence, and shooting them in cold blood?** He alleged that he could produce numerous instances of such outrages by the military, but forbore to do so, as he did not wish to influence the public mind. He declined to agree to the address.

Mr. Pelham (Secretary) said, "*If some of the irregularities complained of* had been committed, they were without the sanction or approbation of Government. He said the military had been moderate, and so had been the administration."

On bringing up the report, Mr. Smith (afterwards Baron of the Exchequer) moved an amendment, praying his Majesty to adopt conciliatory measures. It was seconded by Lord Caulfield, son of the Earl of Charlemont; but according to the rules of the House, it was too late to be received.

On the 5th of March, Sir L. Parsons moved for a committee to inquire into the state of the country, and suggest such measures as were likely to conciliate the popular mind and restore tranquillity. Lord Caulfield spoke well in support of the motion, as did Mr. (afterwards Lord) Plunket; it was also supported by Brown, Hoare, Martin, Tighe, Newenham, and Knox. Lord Castlereagh and a host of placemen opposed the motion, which was lost by a great majority—156 to 19.

The speech of Mr. Plunket caused great sensation. His remonstrance with Government on their proceedings was able and constitutional; but it was in vain addressed to men who had before refused to listen to any lenient or concilia-

* Mr. Vandeleur, in a debate soon after this, made a similar statement and complaint, but in vain.

tory measures. Lord Charlemont, though weak, and ill both in mind and body, and scarcely able to attend to public business, expressed himself in terms of great admiration at Mr. Plunket's successful and spirited display.* In a letter to Dr. Haliday, he speaks of his son (Lord Caulfield) who had made his first appearance in Parliament, and says of him and Mr. Dobbs:—"My two friends have done excellently;—Plunket exceeded all, and is already one of our best and most useful debaters." The following gives a very imperfect sketch of part of Mr. Plunket's speech, but shows how much he disapproved of the course pursued by the Government:†—

"The rebellion of the mind, by which you are assaulted, is dreadful, and not to be combated by force. You have tried that remedy for three years, and the experiment has failed. You have stopped the mouth of the public by a Convention Bill—have committed the property and liberty of the people to the magistrate by Insurrection Acts—you have suspended the Habeas Corpus Act—you have had and you have used a strong military force—as great a force as you could call for—and there has been nothing that could tend to strengthen your hands or enable you to beat down this formidable conspiracy that you have not been invested with. What effect has your system produced? Discontent and sedition has grown threefold under your management.

"Gentlemen had talked of French principles. These principles had grown indeed, but it was because they had not been resisted by proper means. I wonder not that, assisted by these principles, the rotten fabric of the French

* Hardy's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 302.

† Lord Charlemont's opinion of this remarkable and talented person was fully justified. He proved to be one of the ablest men that ever appeared either in the Senate or at the Bar, whether in the Irish House opposing the Union, and defending the Rights and the Constitution of his country, or in the Imperial Parliament advocating the claims of the Catholics, or in his profession, ascending the Bench, or assuming the seals,—he did what few men ever accomplished: he raised himself to the highest honours and offices in the State, and gained the greatest fame, by his abilities alone, and without a sacrifice of character or of principle.

monarchy had tumbled into atoms; nor do I wonder that they carried terror and destruction through the despotism of Europe; but I had hoped that when the hollow spectre of French democracy approached the mild and chaste dignity of the British Constitution, it would have fled before it: it would have done so had you not destroyed the British Constitution before it reached us. You opposed it then with force, and its progress grew upon you. Restore the Constitution, and it will defend you against this monster. Reform your Parliament—cease to bestow upon the worthless the wealth you extract from your people—let the principles of that revolution which you profess to admire, regulate your conduct;—the horrid shade will melt into air."

Government still pursued the same course, and on the 3rd of March they brought in a bill to indemnify magistrates and persons * who had transgressed the law in their efforts to preserve the peace. They passed an Insurrection bill, —a bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus,—and a bill to regulate the freedom of the press, imposing thereon additional penalties. This was ably, but in vain, opposed by Mr. Plunket—Doctor Duigenan attempted to stop the grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, and was successfully opposed by Mr. Bushe, and defeated by 62 to 12. Such were the Parliamentary proceedings.

An instance of the malevolence of Government is recorded in the case of Sir L. Parsons. He had incurred their displeasure in consequence of his motion for conciliation,† and therefore was

* Mr. Plunket proposed that compensation should be given to the honest injured men whose property was destroyed in consequence of such transgressions. Mr. Edgeworth and Mr. Dobbs contended for this principle, but government would not listen to them. Mr. Dodd's distillery and brewing works at Mutifarnham were burned and destroyed by the military in a most wanton manner, to the amount of many thousand pounds, and no compensation whatever was granted. Numbers of persons were similarly circumstanced.

† His conduct on this occasion, and his humanity during these trying times, did not pass unheeded or unrewarded; and when Mr. Parsons, at a

to be immolated to their resentment. As the King had dismissed the Duke of Norfolk from the command of the Yorkshire militia for drinking the toast of "The Sovereignty of the People," Sir L. Parsons was to be cashiered for some reason equally just, or for what he terms, in his letter, "*a mistaken lenity.*" Accordingly, objection was made to the mode of discipline in his regiment, and he was induced to resign.*

SIR LAURENCE PARSONS TO LORD CAMDEN.

Dublin, March, 1798.

My Lord;—I have the honour to inform your Excellency, that Major-General Lord Charles Fitzroy communicated to me yesterday a message which he had received through Lieut.-General Craig, from the Commander-in-Chief, representing that the discipline of my regiment was considerably relaxed since I took the command of it in this garrison, "*through my mistaken lenity;*" and that I should either change my conduct,—which, with my sense of the duties of such a station, I could not do,—or that I should give the power to the other field-officer, a concession to which no Colonel could submit. Conscious *that this accusation is perfectly unmerited by me and the men under my command,* I shall not stoop to take any further notice of it than to say, that as my object, when I was originally prevailed on to accept of the regiment, was to serve my country, and since those in superior authority have been persuaded that my commanding it has had the contrary effect, I shall not continue any longer in that situation; I must, therefore, request that your Excellency will accept of my resignation.

I am, &c. L. Parsons.

LORD CAMDEN TO SIR LAURENCE PARSONS.

Dublin Castle, 28th March, 1798.

Sir;—I had yesterday the honour to receive your letter,

period long subsequent, set up to represent the King's county in the Imperial Parliament, although Lord Rosse and his brother were adverse to the Catholic claims, yet the individuals who supported him and procured him a number of votes, were Roman Catholics. So sensibly did the Irish feel acts of kindness and humanity, rarely shown to them during these sad disturbances.

* Mr. Conolly resigned also the command of the Londonderry militia.

in which you inform me that you request me to accept your resignation of the King's County Regiment of Militia. I lament extremely that you have been induced to take this step in consequence of observations from the general officers upon some relaxation of discipline in that regiment, which, I am convinced, you would easily have corrected; but since this is your determination, I cannot decline to accept that resignation you have transmitted to me. I have the honour to be, with perfect truth,

Sir, your obedient humble Servant,

CAMDEN.

It might be supposed that the leading members of the Opposition would have had some influence with Government, sufficient at least to induce them to interfere and restrain the military, and prevent their excesses. The cause of their absence from Parliament, therefore, requires to be examined. When Sir Jonah Barrington was writing the History of the Irish Union, he applied to me, in 1817, to ascertain from Mr. Grattan the cause of the secession of his party from the Irish Parliament; and in accordance with his wishes, Mr. Grattan gave the following account; which, though it goes beyond the period of the secession, is not the less interesting:—

"The reason why we seceded was, that we did not approve of the conduct of the United Men, and we could not approve of the conduct of the Government. We were afraid of encouraging the former by making speeches against the latter, and we thought it better in such a case, as we could support neither, to withdraw from both.

"After the summer of 1795, and the return to power of the old men and the old system, coupled with the subsequent measures of sending troops into the country, on the petitions to the King, and transporting the common people without trial,—*after that*, the quarrel between the Government and the people became irreconcileable, and it did not avail what Opposition did in Parliament one way or another—*the Minister that day broke with the country*—he answered its petitions by troops. The people in general looked to France, and the Government to arms: both were,

from the close of 1795, in a state of war—the people in rebellion against the King, and the Minister against the Constitution. The success of the former, a French alliance or a French Government; the success of the latter a tyranny with Parliament. And in case of an unsuccessful rebellion, the tyranny with Parliament would have soon ended, like the other, in a tyranny without one. In either case the people would have been completely put down; for though the excesses of the United Men and their objects were indefensible and absurd, yet if vanquished by the ministry, there would have been no popular influence nor effect in Ireland,—it would have been the tyranny of Government, through an Irish Parliament, as it was before, through an English one. The object of the opposition was and should have been to prevent the victory of either party—so to have used the terror excited by the approaches of the French and of rebellion, as to have gotten for the country an improvement in the representation of the people, and an amelioration in the administration of her Government, and, *under those circumstances, to have set rebellion at defiance: thus there would have been a victory of the Constitution, and no other whatever.* If the Opposition had supported the violence of Government in its system of coercion, they would have had no effect in restraining the system of torture, no more than those who supported both had afterwards in opposing the Union.

Our error was in not having seceded sooner; for the Opposition, I fear, encouraged the United Men by their speeches against the Government. The Government were so abominable—their measures were so violent that no man would sanction them. There was high treason certainly, but these were measures that no high treason—that no crimes could warrant. Nothing could excuse the torture—the whippings—the half-hanging—it was impossible to act with them; and in such cases it is always better that a neutral party should retire. We could do no good—we could not join the disaffected party, and we could not support the Government. We would not torture—we would not hold the lash—we would not flagellate.

I had written a letter to the citizens of Dublin that was considered imprudent—it was true—it was well written—but it tended to inflame. I had also written strongly to the Catholicks—I had just returned from England, and we smarted under the disappointment of Lord Fitzwilliam's

recall. Pitt had behaved ill—he jockied Lord Fitzwilliam —he did not jockey me—he was playing tricks: he treated Lord Fitzwilliam very ill. I regret the proceedings—we were angry: it was not wise—but there is no man who in a long *public life will not be guilty of some political errors.* The Government behaved shockingly. There was treason, no doubt;—but treason was no excuse for their conduct—they punished the poor creatures that were deluded, and permitted to live, those who had deluded them. *They did not treat the people as if they were Christians—they treated them not like rebel Christians, but like rebel dogs;* and afterwards, when these men who had thus acted came to be tried at the Union, they sold themselves and their country—it was infamous! *The question men should have asked was not, 'Why was Mr. Sheares upon the gallows?"* but, *'Why was not Lord Clare along with him?'"*

The Government attacked me. I knew they hated me. They attacked me with all the bitterness they possessed. They were malignant and rancorous—they had nothing against me—they forged something—they produced a report in which I was accused of having had an interview with Neilson—and so negligent and so rancorous were they in their attack, that they contradicted themselves on the face of it. They made me hold an interview with Neilson at the very time I was attending a trial at Maidstone—that was notorious—and this they sent to the King. I told them I defied them;—they said they had papers. I called on them to produce them—I bid them do all they could—I told them I would neither give nor receive quarter—I asked *how could such men dare to question any man?—they who were criminals, and who were in rebellion against the constitution of their country.* It was not necessary for me to apologize for not having joined them;—it might be necessary perhaps to offer some reason to posterity why I had not joined the rebels. I would do neither;—the one was a rebel to his King—the other, to his country. In the conscientious sense of the word *rebel*, there should have been a gallows for the rebel, and there should have been a gallows for the ministers. These men were endeavouring for a long series of years to undo what had been done, and destroy that freedom which the country had obtained;—they were, by corruption, restoring that power which had been abandoned, and which had formerly been obtained by usurpa-

tion. I defied them. My reply to Corry produced great effect;—Berwick was there, and he can tell the effect it produced. These men could say nothing in defence of themselves. It might be necessary to say why we had not rebelled—a rebellion may be necessary—in some cases it ought to take place; but no man would rebel with O'Connor. Men will make the distinction, and will say, "Why did they not join O'Connor?" The conduct of the Government will be detested. O'Connor may have been a man of honour—Clare could not. Men will be more blamed in history for having joined the Government, than they would if they had joined the rebels.

Such was the statement of Mr. Grattan to Barrington.

By their spies and informers,* Government were apprised of the meetings of the United Irishmen, and could, if they thought proper, have prevented them; but they allowed them to go on, and thus fermented the Rebellion. They knew they had lost the affections of the people. They wanted the Union, just as Parsons and the Government in 1640 wanted confiscations, and they were determined on effecting, by these means, their favourite object. This appears from the facts related by Lord Clonmell, as stated in the Second Volume of these memoirs, p. 145, from which it is manifest that they could have crushed the conspiracy at the outset, and have prevented the insurrection. Lord Clonmell actually informed one of the conspirators, for whom he entertained some regard, that he knew *where* he had attended their meetings, and *with whom*, and advised him to leave the kingdom immediately, or that he would be apprehended, as Government knew all about him;—this person left Ireland that night, and thus Lord Clonmell probably saved his life, as they sent to arrest him next

* In addition to Lord Moira's list may be added the notorious Jemmy O'Brien (who was hanged at last); Hughes, *the spy sent to Tinnehinch;* Reynolds, who gave the information as to Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the Leinster Delegates; and Armstrong, who betrayed the Sheares.

day. *The dying declarations of Lord Clonmell to his nephew, Dean Scott, (a relation of Mr. Grattan,*) the destruction of the letter which he thought exposed the duplicity of Government, and his remarks at that awful period, (his death,)* "THAT THEY ALLOWED THE UNITED MEN TO GO ON, IN ORDER TO CARRY THE UNION, AND THAT SUCH WAS THEIR DESIGN," must remove all further doubt upon the subject. This attaches a heavy charge against the Irish ministers, and affixes to their memories a disgrace that is indelible.

Lord Clonmell was at that time displeased with the Government, but in his convivial as in his confidential moments was communicative, and apt to tell truths. An instance may be mentioned in the advice he gave to Mr. Lawless (Lord Cloncurry); he said that he entertained a sincere regard for him; that troublesome times were arising; that his spirit would cause him to take a part in them, and that it would be a wise plan to get his father to send him away from Ireland:—"*As to myself,*" added Lord Clonmell, "*if I were to begin life again, I would rather be a chimney-sweeper than be connected with the Irish Government.*" These were his words. This was Lord Clonmell's opinion of the men who composed the ministry in Ireland, and whose conduct appeared to him so indefensible and dishonest. Let us now turn to their opponents, the United Irishmen.

About the 22nd or 23rd of February, 1798, one of the United party, a person of the name of Reynolds, a silk mercer, disclosed to a Mr. Cope the proceedings of his associates; and on the 12th of March, in consequence of his information,† fourteen of the Leinster delegates, forming

* He was married to Miss Bushe, a niece of Mr. Grattan's.

† Cope, it was said, got 5,000*l.* and 1,500*l.* a-year pension. Reynolds bargained for 500*l.*, the price of his information, but he so connected himself with Lord Castlereagh, then appointed secretary, that he forced the

the Provincial committee, were arrested at the house of Oliver Bond, a merchant in Dublin. Thomas Addis Emmett, Doctor M'Nevin, Oliver Bond, John Sweetman, a brewer, two Jacksons, ironmongers, and Richard M'Cormick, a tradesman, were also apprehended; and warrants were issued against Wm. Sampson, a lawyer, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The latter escaped, and the former was some weeks afterwards taken at Whitehaven. The papers of the committee* were brought to the Government, and these disclosed the extent of the conspiracy.† The Privy Council examined the prisoners, ordered the Castle to be put in a state of defence, augmented the military force in the city, and on the 30th issued a proclamation, which stated—

"That a traitorous conspiracy, existing within the kingdom, for the destruction of the established government, had been considerably extended, and had manifested itself in acts of open rebellion; and that in consequence thereof the most direct and positive orders had been issued to the officers commanding his Majesty's forces to employ them with the utmost vigour and decision for the immediate

latter to bring him forward in society. Under the Duke of Wellington, in the Peninsular war, he was made postmaster of Lisbon, and was also called on a grand jury of the county of Middlesex, which excited no inconsiderable indignation.

* Their names were those of men in the middling rank of life, possessed of little influence, and very little property; quite insignificant, and incapable of raising or conducting a civil war, if it had not been for Mr. Pitt and Lord Clare.

Peter Ivers, County of Carlow; Laurence Kelly, Queen's County; George Cummin, Kildare County; Edward Hudson, Grafton Street; John Lynch, Marey's Abbey; Lawrence Griffin, Carlow County; Thomas Reynolds, Clomellon; John M'Cann, Church Street; Patrick Devine, Dublin County; Thomas Traynor, Poolbeg Street; Wm. Michael Byrne, Wicklow County; Christopher Martin, Dunboyne; Peter Bannon, Queen's County; James Rose, Dublin County.

The number of armed men in the province of Leinster only amounted up to the 20th of February, 1798, to 67,295, and their treasury but to 1485*l.* 4*s.* 9*d.*

In the County of Wicklow, 12,895 men; Carlow County, 9,414; Kildare County, 10,863; Queen's County, 11,689; Meath County, 14,000; Kilkenny County, 604.

† The return made to the Irish Parliament, of the arms seized and

suppression of this conspiracy, and for the disarming of the rebels, and all disaffected persons, by the most summary and effectual measures."

It is worth while to examine the composition and character of the party who brought about the insurrection, and subsequently caused the Union. They were, in a great degree, democratic. They had given proofs of their existence as far back as 1782, on the repeal of the 6th of Geo. I.,—in the election of a military convention in 1783,—in their proceedings towards a measure of reform in 1784; in the formation of the United Irishmen in 1791; in the proceeding in 1793 with regard to the Catholics in the north, and in Dublin;—in their attacks on the opposition in 1793, and on Mr. Grattan and the supporters of the war in 1794. The tendencies of this party were Republican, independent of, and uninfluenced by the higher orders, by the aristocracy, or by the Parliamentary opposition, the latter of whom they had repeatedly attacked,* and the former of whom they looked on with aversion, as purchased by the minister to betray the people. They were composed (with regard to their magnitude) of the most active of the old Volunteers. They conceived that they had procured the trade and constitution of their country in 1779 and 1782, and they expected great changes therefrom. They

taken by the military under fifteen generals throughout Ireland, from March to August, 1798, shows how inefficient and ill arranged the preparations of the insurgents must have been; they only amounted to 48,109 guns; 1755 bayonets; 4,463 pistols; 4,183 swords; 70,630 pikes; 248 blunderbusses; 22 ordnance; 119 musket barrels. Numbers of these arms belonged to well affected persons, and to the gentry of the country, who were obliged to give them up to Government. Such was the case at Tinnehinch and its vicinity; but they served to swell up the number, and so cast obloquy upon the people.

* In his Life of Pitt, Gifford, as well as other writers, connects the United party with the members of the Opposition; but on examination, it will appear that they generally attacked them, never consulted them, and greatly mistrusted them.—See Tone's Memoirs.—Evidence before Secret Committee.—Pieces of Irish History, &c.

expected, and had a right to expect, a change of persons and system in the Government—they were mistaken. They had a right to expect a great improvement in the conduct of Parliament—they were disappointed. They expected an independent Parliament—they found a dependent one; they found a corrupt one; they found an incoherent one. Naturally and justly they grew discontented, and sought for reform; and if they had discovered any ability, they would have succeeded; had they remained quiet, and not circulated their imprudent addresses; if they had waited, and not broken out into open war, they would have united all parties against Mr. Pitt; for he had behaved very ill to Ireland—he nearly lost the country, and wholly lost her affections, and all without any justification whatever. He found the people united—he left them divided; and he ran the risk of dismembering the empire, both from internal commotion, and foreign invasion. The Government had acted most violently; they had suffered the military to act shamefully; they kept up an army that was an instrument of power against the privileges of the people, but not of protection; and when the French came, the army was found so bad, that one of its best generals, (Sir Ralph Abercromby) declared it to be incapable;* and if the French had landed 10,000

* "General Orders. *Dublin*, 26 *Feb.* 1798.

"The very disgraceful frequency of courts martial, and the many complaints of irregularities in the conduct of the troops in this kingdom, *having too unfortunately proved the army to be in a state of licentiousness, which must render it formidable to every one but the enemy*, the Commander-in-Chief thinks it necessary to demand from all Generals commanding districts and brigades, as well as commanding officers of regiments, that they exert for themselves, and compel from all officers under their command, the strictest and most unremitting attention to the discipline, good order, and conduct of their men,—such as may restore the high and distinguished reputation the British troops have been accustomed to enjoy in every part of the world. It becomes necessary to recur, and most pointedly to attend to the standing orders of the king-

men, they could have taken the country. But Mr. Pitt's violent measures were lost in the necessity of the times, and in the excesses of the people, both of which screened and saved him; for the authors of the insurrection could make out no case: the acts of the Government would have justified every thing but war. The creating of fifteen new places to buy the Parliament, thereby having a majority of thirty on a division, together with their violent acts in order to force on the Union; this and other corrupt measures, would have gone a great way to prove that the Government wanted to subvert the Constitution; but there could not be any case at that time made out to prove the necessity of rebellion. In fact, it was not to procure Catholic emancipation, or Parliamentary reform, though they were used as instruments to increase their party, that in latter years the United Irish aimed at, but the subversion of all government except a democracy. The leaders felt few of the grievances they complained of: they were chiefly Protestants;* and as to Catholic emancipation, they confessed it had partly been obtained; a few discontented lawyers and doctors, who, when they saw France in

dom, *which at the same time that they direct military assistance to be given at the requisition of the civil magistrates, positively forbid the troops to act (but in case of attack) without his presence and authority, and the most clear and precise orders are to be given to the officer commanding the party for this purpose.*"

* The leaders of the United Irish were in general adverse to the admission of the Catholics into their Union—Tone and Neilson in particular. The latter was well known to have said to a Dublin merchant who was a Protestant,, and in extensive dealings with all classes—"*The worst of the business is, that we must get these Catholics to join us.*" Tone also said to another individual, "*As to the Catholics, they have been driven into the rebellion.*" From the statement already made, it will be observed that in 1797, the number of United men in Protestant Ulster amounted to near 100,000 men, while in 1798, in the larger and more Catholic Province (that of Leinster), they only amounted to 67,295. It however served the party to represent it as a "*Popish Rebellion,*" as Sir Richard Musgrave, Gifford, and others have done.

rebellion, strove not to establish a good constitution, but to subvert all constitution whatsoever,—and establish a democracy; and they not only destroyed the democracy, but the Constitution.

Before the insurrection, Ireland had increased in wealth and commerce; but so ignorant were the leaders of the insurgents, that they had not even an account of her trade, her exports, her imports, her revenue, her taxes; they issued no manifesto; they had no declaration like the Americans in 1776; so that the people knew not what they meant to remedy. They were men without politics, and whose formation was on the worst principle possible,—namely, to separate from the landed interest* both English and Irish, so that they united against themselves the party whose aid was necessary to carry their objects into effect. Some of the leaders had talents, but no integrity, and little ability: the best was Emmett, but he was not fit or capable to be the head of such a party. If he had counselled them to resist legally, and not proceed to violence, he would have succeeded, and defeated both Mr. Pitt, and Lord Clare. Mr. Pitt would have yielded, and would have given up the Irish minister; but he bought and kept the Minister because he had lost the people. Yet, although they stand without justification, they are not by any means without an apology: first, the wildness of the times; next, the execrable government of Lord Clare, and Lord Carhampton, who seemed to excuse their birth by wreaking their vengeance upon their country; and hence it is easy to conceive how men of strong national feelings, high spirit, good principles, and great ardour, could

* In the Banishment Act, 38 Geo. III. c. 78, which contains two pages of the exiles' names, there are only *nine* persons who are designated "*esquires.*"

have joined in a business of that revolutionary character. Here was a very bad government, that strove by corruption, by intrigue, and by force, to take away the privileges that had been solemnly granted a few years before, (just as in the time of Charles the First, the king strove to cheat the people of England out of the concessions he had made); and if to this is added the subversion of the Constitution; and above all, and first of all, the new system of Government—best understood by its strange phraseology and its barbarous sounds,—equally horrid as the necessity they created: *Vapulation — strangulation*—flagellation—conflagration—vigor beyond the law†—free quarters — "means taken to make it explode."‡* This compilation of crime rendered resistance to such a Government, at such a stage, *merely a matter of policy*, and a question of calculation. And if the people had not formed a French connexion; revolution, and the deposition of such ministers would have been justifiable. But if men were in love with rebellion, they should not have joined the party that led the insurrection, for they were peculiarly unfitted for such an enterprize; they seemed to want all the requisites for it — steadiness, constancy,§ fidelity, union, secrecy, and the two grand qualities necessary

* A man of the name of Hepenstall, was called the *walking gallows*, from the circumstance of his hanging men across his shoulder.—See Barrington's History of the Union.

† A serjeant of the North Cork Militia was surnamed *Tom the Devil*, from the practice he introduced of shaving the heads of the peasants, rubbing them with moist gunpowder, and then setting them on fire.—See Gordon's History.

‡ Lord Castlereagh's flagitious and (for his reputation) *fatal* phrase in his examination of Dr. M'Nevin. This is omitted in the house of Commons Report. Lord Clare told M'Nevin *they would only print what would serve their purpose*.—See Pieces of Irish History.

§ In April, 1797, the Ulster Committee were betrayed at Belfast. In March, 1798, the Leinster Committee were betrayed in Dublin. On the 19th of May, Lord Edward Fitzgerald was betrayed, and on the 22nd the Sheares's.

for every revolt — money and courage. They turned the entire business into a riot. They rose in an irregular manner—no chieftain—no generals: some betrayed—some fled—some confessed. The leaders escaped, and the people became the victims. The Irish are very unjustly accused of being bad subjects; but it may be fairly said, they are the worst rebels.*

The most remarkable of these men were the family of the Emmetts, three sons of Doctor Emmett, a physician of some note and considerable practice. He attended Mrs. Grattan in her illness, but his mind seemed more engaged with politics than medicine, and Mr. Grattan used jocularly to say, "Emmett had his pill and his plan, and he mixed so much politics with his prescription, that he would kill the patient who took the one, and ruin the country that listened to the other." The education he gave his sons was singular, and led to much of their misfortunes. Curran used to describe him very drolly, giving them their "*morning draught*,"—"Well, Temple, what would you do for your country? Addis! would you kill your brother for your country?—would you kill your sister for your country?—would you kill me?" Thus he misdirected the natural spirit of youth, and infused into their minds an extravagant sort of patriotism.

On one occasion, as Mr. Grattan was going into the House of Commons, old Emmett followed him with much bustle, imploring him not to lose a moment. "Go in and propose my plan;—it is the only thing can save the country." He handed

* When Mr. Grattan was at Maidstone with Fox, Erskine and Mr. O'Brien (a friend of Fox,) the latter observed to him, "If I were to rebel, it never would be with your countrymen (Mr. Grattan); for by G—— hey are the worst rebels I ever heard of." An individual came in to converse with Erskine about the trial, and in a short time Erskine said, "Sir, I would not advise Mr. O'Connor to call you as a witness: for from your conversation, I would hang you in five minutes."

to Mr. Grattan a paper containing his prescription, which Mr. Grattan represented as the most extraordinary compound. One part of it was to increase the votes in the House, not by increasing the number of members, but by giving each member, a number of voices :—thus, Mr. Grattan was to count as five, Curran four, Hardy three, and so on!

Temple Emmett, Thomas Addis Emmett, and Robert Emmett, were three most singular men. Few families could boast of such individuals.

Temple Emmett, before he came to the bar, knew more law than any of the Judges on the bench; and if he had been placed on one side, and the whole bench opposed to him, he could have been examined against them, and would have surpassed them all;—he would have answered better both in law and divinity than any judge or any bishop in the land. He had a wonderful memory — he recollected everything — it stuck to him with singular tenacity. He shewed this in his early youth, and on one occasion he gave a strong instance of it. There existed at that time in Dublin college an institution called the Historical Society;—there were subjects selected for discussion, and prior to the debate there was an examination in history. On one occasion the books happened to be mislaid, and it was thought no examination could have taken place; but Emmett, whose turn it was to be in the chair, and who had read the course, recollected the entire, and examined in every part of it, and with surprising ability. His eloquence was great, but spoiled by imagery. He had a singular taste—it was poetry; in fact, he could not speak prose. On one occasion he was to close the sitting of the Society by a speech from the chair—he did so in a most eloquent, but

flowery harangue;—it was full of talent, but it was a speech of blank verse. He sent it to Peter Burrowes, a great friend and admirer of the family;—he begged of him to alter it, so that it might appear in the best manner, and to cut out such parts as he thought proper. Burrowes tried, but found he could not alter it without changing the entire—it was nothing but poetry. One passage Mr. Burrowes used to repeat with great earnestness and animation:—"America!—America!—the land of arts and of arms, where that goddess, Liberty, was wooed and won, and twelve young eaglets springing from her nest, bore freedom upwards on their soaring wings." The whole was like this style, and Burrowes returned it, being unable to comply with the wishes of the speaker. He did not appear often in public, or interfere much in politics. He died young, in 1788, at an early age, and in high practice at the bar.

The next was Thomas Addis. He was called to the bar in 1790;—a very clever man. He possessed a powerful and logical mind, great talent and spirit. He was more connected with the people than his brother Temple, though he did not become a United Irishman till the end of 1796. He avoided, however, to plead for them openly; but in private he advised them, and when his character was not likely to be of disservice he came forward.

There was a case in which Mr. Burrowes prosecuted, as counsel for the crown, at Clonmell assizes, before Prime Serjeant Fitzgerald; the charge was for administering the United Irishman's oath. Thomas Addis was in the case, but would not appear, as his being concerned in it would have been quite sufficient for the jury to decide against his client; but he appeared on a

motion in arrest of judgment; and he argued the case with a knowledge of law, and a power of logic, that surprised every one who heard him. He displayed an intimacy with the abstrusest parts of the science, and maintained that in no country could such an oath be considered penal; that no one could be punished for taking it: and he concluded by a bold act. After a short pause he addressed the court thus:

"My Lords, here in the presence of this legal court, this crowded auditory, in the presence of the Being that sees and witnesses, and directs this judicial tribunal,—here, my Lords, I—I myself, in the presence of God, declare, I take the oath."

He accordingly kissed the book, and sat down. The court were surprised. They took no step against him; they were afraid; and the prisoner's punishment soon after was reduced to something very trifling.

The youngest brother, Robert, was a very clever man, but devoid of prudence and of judgment. His objects were quite visionary; yet he was an honourable enthusiast—as much opposed to the French as to the English, and ready to make war against both. He possessed the powers of eloquence in a surprising degree; and Mr. Burrowes (a good judge), used to say, that he was superior in this respect to any man he ever heard, in any country. He had a richness, a flow, and a style, both as to matter and manner, above any thing he had ever heard from any man. There were fine traits too in his character: the following was one of them. His attachment to Miss Curran was well known.* When he was sent to prison for the outbreak in 1803, he took aside the gaoler, and gave him a letter for Miss Curran, and all the money he had about him, and begged

* A small tract, entitled "The Broken Heart," gives an account of it.

that he would deliver it safe. The man, in the discharge of his duty, gave the letter to the Attorney-general. Emmett found *this* out, and he immediately sent to Government to say he had imprudently written such a letter; that it had come to their hands: he had thus injured an innocent and guiltless female; and knowing how much the Government were afraid of his addressing the people at his execution, he begged of them to have the letter delivered, and that if they refused, he would not fail to address the people, and would do so with greater determination; but if they sent the letter, he would agree to appear in court, plead guilty, and go to execution without saying a word. That was certainly a fine trait in his character. The letter related to politics as well as to love; and in it he mentions there was only one thing in the whole of his conduct with which he had (and justly), to reproach himself—that was his imprudence; and one great cause of his failure, he attributed to the mildness of the Government; which he termed their "insidious moderation." This was the severest censure on Lord Camden's administration, and the highest praise of Lord Hardwicke's. The one inflamed the people by its violence—the other disarmed them by its moderation. Mr. Grattan's remarks on the Emmetts, though in a jocular strain, are not devoid of interest.

Emmett and his father were both quacks—one in politics, the other in physic—the one was a statesman despising experience, and the other a physician despising practice. They did much mischief. Emmett's plan of reform was abominable, as well as impracticable: he set up his own crude notions as settled rules; and his plan was founded not upon practice, but upon his own imagination; it was full of wildness—there were to be 300 elections every year, all going on at the same time, and every man was to possess a right to vote. The whole country

was thus to be placed in a state of tumult and agitation—all in conflagration—like 300 windmills in motion all at once—this too in a country, one-third of whose population were so destitute that they were exempted from paying hearth-money tax, in consequence of their poverty. Emmett forgot that elections and representation are a work of art—he considered them as one of the operations of Nature.

When he went to America, he thought his political life was at an end, but it was only just beginning. Had Government intended to have rendered him harmless, they should have kept him at home, where he would have staid, a tarnished lawyer, with little business; but, sent to America, he found means to annoy England, and do there what he never could have done in his own country.

England should take care—she transports a great deal of hostile spirit to that quarter.

The following letter, with which I was favoured by Mr. Burrowes, possesses some interest, and bears upon the remark made by Mr. Grattan; it is a good lesson to future governments not to render men such as Emmett, enemies to the country. The death of an individual removes a foe, but the proscription of a tribe, perpetuates their implacability. The Irish Government ineffectually tried both. Mr. Emmett's reception in America; the rank he rose to in his profession,* and the honours paid to him after his death, are too well known to be repeated.

THOMAS ADDIS EMMETT TO PETER BURROWES.

New York, 19th Nov. 1806.

My dear Burrowes;—I had the pleasure of receiving yours of July last in due time; and first, as to the matter of business to which it alludes. I have inquired after Mr. ——'s claim to property in Baltimore, and the result is pretty conclusively, that nothing can now be done, and probably never could, even if the party entitled had come out here to urge his claim. Mr. —— is at present at

* He was attorney-general of New York, and would have been elected to Congress, if he had chosen. His remains were honoured with the finest funeral next to Washington's and Franklin's.

Baltimore, and I have furnished him with all the information I could get before his departure, and on his return shall put into his hands another letter I have since received; he, therefore, will, I suppose, write more particularly than I have time to do. As to your late law arrangements, I sincerely rejoice, my good friend, that promotion has fallen upon your head,* and those of some others where I think it well bestowed. However, there are in the list of promotions, men of whom I never wish to think; because I cannot think of them without the strongest emotions of aversion and disgust—strong and warm as was my former friendship. In the conclusion of your letter, you ask a question which, if I did not know the occasional absence of your thoughts,† would have caused me much speculation,—"Do you ever mean to visit us?" says an influential officer of the government of Ireland to a proscribed exile, whose return would be death by law; "or to send over any of your children?" A man who was very anxious to return would catch at this offer; but that is not my case. I am settled here with the fairest prospects for myself and my children. My principles and my sufferings were my first passport and introduction here, and they procured me the effective friendship of the leading characters in this State, and in the Union at large. In proportion as I cherish those principles, I am respected; and every day's reflection and observation makes them dearer to me. Ought I to go where they are treasonable and sufficient ground for perpetual proscription? Besides, my good friend, I am too proud, when vanquished, to assist by my presence in gracing the triumph of the victor; and with what feelings should I tread on Irish ground?—as if I were walking over graves, and those the graves of my nearest relations and dearest friends. No; I can never wish to be in Ireland, except in such a way as none of my old friends connected with the Government could wish to see me placed in. As to my children, I hope they will love liberty too much ever to fix a voluntary residence in an enslaved

* He was appointed first counsel to the Commissioners of Revenue, under Mr. Fox's administration in 1806; not a permanent situation, but at that time a lucrative one.

† An instance of Mr. Burrowes's absence of mind is well known.—Being on circuit, a brother barrister entered his room while at breakfast, and found Burrowes standing at the fire, as he thought, boiling his egg, but in mistake, he had put his watch in the saucepan, and was holding the egg in his hand.

country. Nothing in their future prospects gives me greater pain than the fear that my eldest boy will be obliged, when he comes of age, to go to Ireland, to dispose of some settled property, which, if I were worth a few thousand dollars more, I should wish rather in the hands of my greatest enemy than his. There is not now in Ireland an individual that bears the name of Emmett—I do not wish that there ever should, while it is connected with England —and yet it will, perhaps, be remembered in its history.*

With the very sincerest and warmest esteem, believe me ever yours, T. A. EMMETT.

The next was Lord Edward Fitzgerald, of noble descent, strong Irish feelings, ancient Irish family—and one that had given many martyrs in the cause of their country.† He was a man of gallant bearing, high honour, great spirit, and unquestionable courage. His deportment was graceful and pleasing; his voice was sweet, and its tones harmonious; his person was light and agile; his manner was gentle and attractive, and he was sure to engage, if not to captivate, by his ingenuous ardour, and his winning address. He had travelled in his youth, and had seen somewhat of the world, both in Europe and America; but he did not know the arts and the baseness of men, though he hated their excesses. He was a most

* Mr. Burrowes seems to have forgotten that the Banishment Act punished with transportation any person who corresponded with the Irish exiles. His transgression, however, was purely innocent, and is at once a proof that many of our laws are of little avail, and that men are governed much more by the feelings of the mind, than by the enactments of the statute.

† They were said to be in those days *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*.—In the time of Henry VIII., Gerald, ninth Earl of Kildare, who had been Lord Deputy in Ireland, was called over to London to answer certain charges that were maliciously preferred against him. He was committed to the Tower to await the decision of the King, but died through grief and disappointment. His son, Lord Thomas, resisted the Deputy, Lord Grey; he was taken prisoner, and sent to England along with his five uncles, three of whom had never taken up arms; however, *they were all put on their trial, and all executed*. A few years afterwards, Lord Gerald, his son Thomas, and two more of the family were attainted by act of parliament.

attached and dutiful son, a kind master, and an affectionate and tender husband. Born in 1763, he served in the British army in America, in 1781, under Lord Cornwallis, Lord Moira, (then Rawdon) and General (afterwards Sir John) Doyle. On the retreat of some of the British troops he shewed skill and judgment; he displayed much gallantry on the occasion, and was wounded in the service. In 1783 he returned to Ireland, and was elected Member of Parliament for the borough of Athy. At the period of the French Revolution, being unfortunately in Paris, he attended a public dinner,—assumed the name of *citizen Fitzgerald*, — and, along with several Englishmen, drank some Jacobinical toasts, which gave great offence to the British authorities, and he was, in consequence, deprived of his commission in the army.* This insult, as well as injury, preyed deeply upon his mind, and he never forgot or forgave it. He returned to Ireland—vexed and indignant, and impregnated with French doctrines, and with the political sentiments of the day: he suffered himself to be influenced a good deal by resentment; and having married a French lady,† was somewhat affected, and perhaps injured by her principles and foreign connexions. His name would, probably, have had weight in any civil commotion, and he might have formed a standard around which a good deal of the spirit and enthusiasm of the Irish would be likely to have rallied. He would have commanded a regiment well, and possibly, in time, an army. He had a quick eye, great presence of mind, rapid decision, firmness of purpose, great boldness—no sense whatever either of danger or of fear;

* He was on the eve of being appointed Major.

† He married, in the latter end of 1792, Pamela, a pretty, interesting little woman, daughter of Egalité, Duke of Orleans and Madame de Genlis, by whom he had a son and two daughters.

but he was not without great imprudence, and some vanity.* His want of caution appeared on his journey on the Continent in 1796, when his conversation enabled one of his travelling companions to penetrate his object; and a lady, who happened to be one of the company, and singularly enough, connected with a friend of Mr. Pitt, communicated to him through that channel, what she conceived to be his designs. After the period of his arrest on the 19th of May, he appears to have exposed himself unnecessarily and imprudently, and this, in all probability, led to his discovery and capture. His generous and manly nature, with his frank, open disposition, rendered him too confiding. He lacked the qualities required for a conspirator—darkness, reserve, craft, caution, dissimulation. He had feelings of revenge, but none of inhumanity, and was sensitively alive to the injuries inflicted on his country. He strove to avenge them prematurely; but he had not judgment to devise the proper plan —prudence to concert it, or patience to await the fitting moment for its execution: thus blinded and bewildered, he precipitated his own downfall, and that of his country. He fell a victim to a generous enthusiasm, and a mistaken sense of patriotism, and was sacrificed and betrayed by a low and faithless set, and lost his life in a wild and foolish insurrection.

Next came Arthur O'Connor. He was a man of talent, of spirit, and of eloquence; pleasing in appearance, and rather engaging in manners; but he was devoid of principle. His commencement in the Irish Parliament in 1790, was a bad one. He opposed the Pension Bill of Mr. Forbes, and praised the Earl of Westmoreland, then Lord-lieutenant. He spoke ill—injured, perhaps, by the

* Murat was one of Buonaparte's best and vainest officers.

badness of his cause; but though he made an inauspicious beginning, yet soon afterwards he rallied. He cast off the rusty fetters of the court, and their sycophantic phrases; and on the Catholic question he came forward with power and effect. His speech was an excellent performance, and greatly admired; it embraced much extraneous matter, and showed that he had studied much, and was a clever and an eloquent man: his statements were able; his argument was close and short, and his composition without a defect. He had been intended for the church, and had taken deacon's orders; but he soon abandoned that profession, and was brought into Parliament by his relation Lord Longueville, who offered him a situation under Government, which he states that he refused; differing, however, from him in political views, and voting against his patron, he conceived himself obliged in honour, to relinquish his seat; and the other thought he was bound not only to take that from him, but his fortune likewise; and he ungenerously deprived him of a considerable property which O'Connor expected to inherit. His addresses to the county of Antrim, for which he was imprisoned, (but without trial or sentence), possess spirit and ability, but evince a want of prudence and discretion, and partake too much of the style and the foreign fashion of the day. His letter to Lord Castlereagh, from prison, was manly and fearless. *French fraternity* was his ruin. He was certainly a man of parts; but wanted somewhat more good faith, sound judgment, and sterling principles.*

M'Nevin was an able man—Jackson a man of

* After a long detention in captivity at Fort George, contrary both to the letter and the spirit of the agreement made on the part of the exiles with the Irish Government, he entered into the military service of France, and was appointed by Buonaparte one of the officers to call out the Conscription of the North.

spirit and of honour. Mr. Burrowes, who knew them all, used to relate an anecdote of the latter that redounds to his credit. There was a young person who attended the meetings of the United Irishmen, for whom Jackson had a great regard, and he said to him, "Leave us—you have a large family—go home, and have nothing to do with the United Irishmen. I am embarked too deeply—I cannot recede." He was a gentleman, and also a republican—but a republican who would have been led to support a settled form of government by the correction of abuses.

Henry and John Sheares were brothers, men of good character in the South of Ireland, well-educated, and brought up to the profession of the law. They were, in private, amiable, pleasing, and gentle in their nature; Henry in particular, almost to weakness. They were men of good repute, and of some practice at the bar; but in point of ability, spirit, and courage, such as was necessary for the dangerous enterprize in which they engaged, they were very deficient. They had gone to France for a short period of time, and from thence they returned with French principles, with whimsical notions and revolutionary ideas. They assumed the emblems of party, its colours, and its ribands, which they displayed when danger was not near; but at its approach these foolish badges led them into peril, and then they became afraid. They entered late into the executive directory of the United Irishmen, and were most basely and cruelly betrayed by a Captain Armstrong, who gained their confidence, encouraged their plots, forwarded their objects, then sacrificed their lives. All this was done for weeks, with the knowledge and approbation of Government, who, far from arresting them at the outset, or even during the progress of their treason, deliberately

encouraged it through their agent, and, as cruel-hearted as they were cold-blooded, treacherously awaited till the moment of its execution,* and then they pounced upon their ensnared and deluded victims. The brothers walked hand-in-hand to the same scaffold, and perished together.

Samuel Neilson was a man of principle: his real object was Parliamentary Reform. He conducted a newspaper set up at Belfast, in 1791, upon republican principles. He had been imprisoned for upwards of a year, on the information of a person, who declared afterwards that no charge could be proved against him, and was liberated in February 1798. He was sent for, and closetted with Mr. Pelham, on an enquiry by the Secretary as to the probability of conciliating the North of Ireland by granting Reform, and at the period of his release he was in habits of intercourse with the people of the Castle. They sought him in order to obtain intelligence, as he was an open-mouthed person. He was not devoid of taste and talent, was fond of books, and in politics was extravagant, but not irreclaimable. He was imprudent in conduct, very intemperate in his habits, and addicted to dissipation, all which rendered him very unfit† for an undertaking such as that in which he was embarked.

His figure was Herculean, and his mind and manner were similar, and as bold. He attempted to force the jail, after the capture of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and rescue the State

* *Lord Castlereagh could have stopped them at least one fortnight before, for he was regularly informed by Armstrong of the result of each interview, and every communication with the Sheares's—but he allowed them to go on.*—See the trial.

† The letter of Sheares, found on him when he was arrested, in which the former expostulated with him on his attempt to rescue the state prisoners, is a proof of his want of judgment and prudence, and shows how little concert and subordination existed among the leaders even of that party.—Report Secret Committee.

prisoners at Newgate. He was taken; his clothes were torn off him, and his body wounded all over by the soldiers hacking at him; he was cut and scarred in upwards of fifty places, and was only saved by the number of his opponents, and dragged into jail. When brought into the Court, the noise of his entrance was like the march of men in iron. He was called on to plead, and asked if he had anything to say; he replied, in a stentorian voice, "No!—I have been robbed of everything; I could not fee counsel; my property—everything has been taken from me!"—and he turned away, but he came again to the front, and said, "For myself, I have nothing to say—*I scorn your power, and despise that authority that it shall ever be my pride to have opposed;* but I may say—not that I value it—why am I kept with these weighty irons on me, so heavy that three ordinary men could scarcely carry them? Is it your law, that I should be placed in irons, and in such irons?" Lord Carleton,* who was one of the Judges, called up the jailor (Gregg) to account for this: he said, "It is true, my Lord, he is in irons, and in such irons as I would not think of putting on any two men; but it was necessary—my life was attempted—I was not safe." Neilson interrupted

* Lord Carleton had been solicitor-general several years before. He was a timid man; his mind was weakness itself. He understood law very well, and proved to be an excellent judge. He was very sharp, and at the state trials was cool and collected, not influenced by the fury and passion of the times, though he was by the result. He was remarkable for a pleasing address, and for the goodness of his manners; but in politics he had no idea whatever of public spirit or principle; in the House of Commons he made a wretched figure. In the Lords he supported the Union, not by arguments, but in the weakest and most pusillanimous style of reasoning. After that, he was allowed to retire on a large pension, in consequence of a plea of bad health, and he lived in London for upwards of twenty years in the gayest style.

Some lawyer observing to Curran that his sharpness surprised him, Curran replied, "Don't you know that water turned to ice cuts like adamant? That's Carleton's case. All his former fears have collected themselves, and have become condensed."

him: "*Your* life!—I scorned to take it—I did not resist till I was nearly torn to pieces—and in defence of myself I resisted—I would *scorn* to take your life"—and he looked at him with savage contempt. He refused to engage counsel to defend him; his trial, however, did not come on, and he was included in the list of exiles that went into banishment.

Curran, who had undertaken his defence, went to see him in prison. He was loaded with chains, but his mind was firm and undaunted, and his spirits as buoyant as in the days of prosperity: fear never entered into his composition. Curran exclaimed, "Neilson, I am sorry to see you thus." "Oh!" said he, kicking off his chains, "do you think I wear these always? I sent for John the inspector. 'John, do you see that bottle?—do you see this half-crown?—what should be done with this half-crown and that bottle?' 'Fill it with whiskey, Sir,' said he. 'Now, John, I have been kind to you heretofore—look here, take notice of these pins—I will break that bottle on your head; so make your election, either fetch the whiskey or have the bottle broken on your head.'" "But," said Curran, "are you not afraid to speak thus?—don't you know they may chain you to the ground?—not able to stir?" "What of that?" Neilson replied; "it is but for a time;—my limbs will feel more pleasant when they get out of them."*

Curran used to relate another anecdote of him and Reynolds the informer. The latter was in the pay of Government, and at length began to be suspected. Neilson one day saw him in College Green, and coming up, he seized him with Her-

* After his liberation from Fort George, he went, in 1802, to Altona, and subsequently to Van Dieman's Land, where he died, as I heard, from dissipation.

culean force, and kept his arm under him as if in a vice; he hurried him along without opening his lips, until he got him into a dark entry off Thomas-street; and having got him in there, he exclaimed, "Reynolds! what punishment do you think should be inflicted upon a villain who would betray you?" Reynolds was frightened, but having had time to collect himself, looking at Neilson he exclaimed, "Bring me to the atrocious villain, and with this hand I will blow his brains out"—he *acted* it *well*. Neilson said, "Ah! you are doubted;—I shall have you watched—if you go away, depend on it you will fall." A few days after Reynolds betrayed them all.

CHAPTER XI.

Mr. Grattan remains at Tinnehinch—Visit by Neilson *and the Government spy*—Mr. Grattan's statement—Conduct of Government—Reynolds the informer—Lord Edward Fitzgerald—Lord Clonmell—The Ancient Britons—Lord Dufferin's visit—O'Connor's trial—Narrative by Mrs. Grattan—Excesses by the Yeomanry and Ancient Britons—French tutor's escape from hanging—Mr. Grattan arrested in London—Free quarters at Mrs. Bermingham's—Mrs. Grattan goes to Wales—Sir Ralph Abercromby resigns the command of the troops in Ireland—Cruel orders of Sir James Stuart—Arrest and death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—Conduct of Lord Camden—Lady Louisa Conolly and Lord Clare—Insurrection breaks out 23rd of May—Martial law proclaimed—Conduct of John Claudius Beresford and Colonel Maxwell (afterwards Lord Farnham)—Proposals of execution and confiscation discouraged—Excesses of the military—Burning Maynooth, Kilcock, Celbridge—Conduct in the county of Wicklow—*Sir John Moore's* remarks on the Yeomanry—Various conflicts during the Insurrection—General Nugent's cruel proclamation—The chieftains Holt and Dwyer, traits of—Mr. Sheridan's motion in the British House of Commons on behalf of Ireland—Lord Cornwallis sent to Ireland—Landing and capture of the French under Humbert—Dr. Duigenan's pamphlet, attacks Mr. Grattan—The latter proceeds to Dublin—Narrow escape at Tinnehinch—Letters to Mr. Berwick and M'Can—Report of Secret Committee of the House of Lords—Neilson and Hughes' evidence—Difference between the Reports of the Commons and the Lords—Mr. Grattan disfranchised by the corporation of Dublin—His name struck from the privy council—Letters of Dowdall and Neilson—Mr. Grattan's letters to Mr. Fox, Mr. Bermingham, and Mr. M'Can—Statement by Mr. Grattan submitted to Mr. (afterwards Lord) Erskine—Opinion of the latter—Mr. Grattan's letter to the *Courier* newspaper on his disfranchisement by the Dublin corporation—Letters of Mr. Berwick and Mr. Fox—Dowdall and Bird's *singular letters* to Mr. Grattan.

During these melancholy and eventful times, Mr. Grattan remained in the country, well aware, however, of the danger that surrounded him; having seen by the disclosures made to Lord Moira, what the informers and spies of Government were capable of doing—what desperate courses they pursued, and how ready they were to take away a man's reputation, his liberty, or his life.

An event occurred at this period, which, though in appearance trivial, might have proved fatal to him in times of civil commotion, where party rage and passion so strongly prevailed, and where reason and justice were wholly lost sight of. This circumstance was the visit of Samuel Neilson to Tinnehinch, in company with *Hughes, the spy of Government*. The proceeding, if not preconcerted so as to affect Mr. Grattan's life, was certainly done in order to injure his character, and was purposely set forth with much parade by the Government party, in the Report of the House of Lords. Passion blinded Lord Clare, and he inserted the evidence; but Mr. Foster (the Speaker), seeing at once the glaring perjury of the informer, objected to have it introduced in the evidence of the Commons,—and hence the difference that exists between the two reports. Unquestionably, if Neilson had followed the example of Hughes, he might (in part at least) have corroborated his perjury; but Neilson was a man not to be seduced or intimidated; and as will subsequently be seen, he declared the truth, as far as he was concerned, and exposed the falsehood and baseness of the Government party.

The account which Mr. Grattan gave to me of the transaction was as follows:

"The conversation and interview with Neilson was nothing—it was quite accidental. I was in my study, and Neilson was shown up along with a Mr. Hughes, whom I did not know. They complained very much of the excesses in the north of Ireland, and of the murders of the Catholics; and I remember Hughes saying that the phrase used by the anti-Catholics was, 'To Connaught or to hell with you!' They stated their numbers to be very great, and I then asked, 'How does it come, then, that they are always beat?' I did not ask the question with a view to learn their force, as the examination would lead one to believe, but in consequence of these two individuals boasting of the numbers of those men who could not protect themselves.

Hughes then went down stairs, and Neilson asked me to become a United Irishman. I declined. He produced the constitution, and left it in the room. This was nothing new; I had seen it long before, and it was generally printed and published. Hughes then returned, and they both went away. That was the entire of the transaction to which so much importance was attached."

I believe Mr. Grattan knew very little about the individuals who composed the United Party. He did not associate with them; they kept clear of him —they feared him—and certainly they did not like him. Tone stated so, and Neilson likewise. Mr. Grattan did not know the Sheares, even by sight. Of Sampson he had a very slight knowledge. O'Connor he knew merely from being in Parliament: with Emmett (the son), he had little acquaintance. He entertained a better opinion of Neilson, thinking him a practical man, who had shown his readiness to support a rational reform, and lay aside the wild notions of universal suffrage and annual parliaments.

Mr. Grattan was by far too experienced a person to place himself in that distressing situation, where he would be privy to proceedings which would have been disagreeable to him to know, and dangerous not to reveal. I believe he had a very inferior opinion of the United Men, and of their abilities. He thought that the insurrection could have been stopped if Government had chosen; but that they fermented it for their own views. Men without a treasury,—with a deficient armoury, without rank, or weight, or consequence: an undisciplined mass of people, devoid of military leaders, and experience. Their proceedings he considered not only mischievous, but ridiculous; and he was to the last degree provoked, when he beheld the triumph over the country and the Constitution, which he had assisted to procure, given by such misguided men as the insurgents, to such designing and wicked men

as the Ministers—Carhampton, Clare, Castlereagh,—and last, not least—Archbishop Agar. This, indeed, almost drove him to a state of distraction. It is probable that if his real opinion had been asked, he would have told the United Men,—"You are a pack of blockheads! and will surely get yourselves hanged; and you should all be put in the pillory for your mischief and your folly!" Unquestionably, Mr. Grattan would not have followed the example of the Minister, who, knowing the treason, deliberately permitted it to proceed, and thereby irretrievably injured the country. Reynolds, the informer, has removed all doubt on the subject. In a very long and involved affidavit, he completely exposed the conduct of Government; for he swore *that on the 24th of February, 1798, he dined with Lord Edward Fitzgerald,* who gave him various papers in his own writing, to copy; that these stated the number of men—the amount of prisoners—the military and political resolutions of the United party. He swears *that the next day, the 25th, he made the disclosure to Cope, for the purpose of informing the Government:* he told all he knew of their plans, and in particular, the account of the proceedings that he got from Lord Edward. Cope proceeded to inform the Government, having purposely applied to Reynolds. It is thus clear that Lord Edward could have been immediately apprehended and very possibly on the next day, if the Government party chose it; but far from that, they did not arrest him till nearly three months after, and within three days of the insurrection breaking out. During that interval, this spy of Government (in their pay, and receiving 500*l.* for his discovery), *had repeated interviews, and by appointment, with Lord Edward.* He swears, that on the 11th of March, before the arrests took place, he met him at *Leinster House,* (*the Government all*

this time being aware that Lord Edward was thus implicated)—that on the 14th of March he had another interview with him; and on the 15th of March, a third, *specially arranged the night previous, by Lord Edward, with Reynolds, to take place at the same hour and the same house.* Thus his arrest could easily have been made,— and he being early taken,—the subsequent bloodshed and carnage would have been spared to the country, and to humanity.

It was for this connivance—*this misprision of treason,* that Lord Clonmell found fault with the Minister: he did not wish to conceal the treason, and let it ripen. Lord Clonmell, who had some knowledge of law, though, perhaps, no great love for the Constitution of Ireland, thought that the state was likely to receive great injury, whether the conspiracy was kept secret by the party who wished it to succeed, or by those who wished the reverse; whether it was hatched by the conspirator, or fostered by the Minister—by a man who did not wish to hang the traitors, or by one who wished to destroy them—*and something more —the Constitution also.* Lord Clonmell was not of a cold-blooded temperament; he strove to stop this disastrous business at the outset; but, as he stated to his nephew, he was over-ruled, and his advice rejected by the Council. Hence his strong and homely phrase, reproaching the Government, and saying, "*he would rather be a chimney-sweeper than be connected with them.*" Hence his dying declaration to Dean Scott, the disclosure of his conduct, and that of his colleagues. At his last hour, he sought to clear himself before the world, and to free his conscience of the heinous crime of blood; and he stands acquitted in the sight of his country and his God!

But it is impossible that other members of that Government can escape the censure of a cool and

calm-judging posterity. Let the foregoing statements be read—the facts and dates referred to,—and no honest man will hesitate to pass upon them the sentence of 'Guilty.' It almost seemed on their part a refinement, as well as a love of cruelty; for while they were ensnaring their victims, and stealthily drawing the net over their devoted heads, they affected a regard for the individuals they were victimizing; and Lord Clare tells some of the Leinster family, "For God's sake let that young man be sent out of the kingdom—the ports shall be left open for his departure;" while at that very time *the paid spy and protégé of Castlereagh — this notorious Reynolds*—was meeting, conferring, consulting, and plotting with Lord Edward, under the sanction of Government, from the 25th of February to the 16th of March!! What dereliction of public duty could be greater? —what private treachery more infamous? What more cruel or cold-blooded crime—more odious or abhorred in sight of God or man! More—much more I could add; but enough has been said to extenuate the conduct of the ensnared and unhappy people, and to vindicate, though, perhaps, not to clear, the character of my ill-treated country.

The object of those in power, and their underlings, which might almost be called "*the order of the day*," seemed to be to get one man to swear against another, and on the slightest information the person was taken up and sent to Dublin Castle or to gaol. I recollect to have heard that some of the furious self-styled loyalists used to exclaim, "*Will no one swear against Grattan!*" and I remember on one occasion great alarm was excited in the neighbourhood of Tinnehinch, by the sergeant of the Yeomanry corps coming up the road at full gallop, and his sabre drawn, exclaiming, "*Such a man, by G— ! has sworn against Grattan!*" The

people were also thrown into a state of the greatest terror by the Ancient Britons, who were quartered in the county, who frightened the inhabitants, and committed the greatest excesses.* Such being the fearful state of affairs, a relation of Mrs. Grattan (Stevenson Blackwood, afterwards Lord Dufferin,) a member of Parliament, and supporter of Government, a man of the best heart and kindest feelings, came purposely to Tinnehinch, and represented to her "that as her health was infirm, and caused her frequently to go to England, it would be prudent of her to make such an excuse at present, and that it could be done without creating any bad appearance in order to take Mr. Grattan out of the country, for the times were dangerous, *and that he was watched.*† This she mentioned to Mr. Grattan; but he was obstinate, and would not stir. At length Mr. Fox and Arthur O'Connor did by accident what she and her friends in vain attempted; they applied to him to go over to England to give evidence at Maidstone at the trials for high treason; O'Connor, along with four individuals, had been arrested on the 27th of February, in attempting to get across from Margate to the Continent. O'Connor had taken an active part in Parliament on the Catholic question, and had made some sacrifices for the maintenance of his opinions: he was acquainted with Sir Francis Burdett and several members of Parliament in England; his case was

* Barrington, in his History of the Union, asserts that the ancient Britons actually sawed a man's head off; they were commanded by Major Wardle, who instituted the proceedings in 1809 against the Duke of York respecting Mrs. Clarke: their colonel was Sir Watkin Williams Wynn; they were a savage and a sanguinary crew, and expiated their cruelties and their crimes at Ballyellis, in the county of Wexford, where most of them were killed by Holt and his party.—See Gordon — Musgrave—Holt's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 78.

† Lord Dufferin was a great friend of Lord Castlereagh, and it is likely that he may have been apprised through this channel of Hughes' visit to Tinnehinch.

taken up by them with much eagerness, and he was warmly espoused by the English Opposition. Mr. Grattan was now applied to, to give evidence as to his character;—and he felt that it would have been a great reflection upon him, when his fellow-countryman was on trial for his life, if he should have been supported by Englishmen and abandoned by the Irish. He accordingly went over in the month of April. The result is well known; O'Connor was acquitted, and O'Coigley, a Roman Catholic priest, was found guilty and executed.*

A memorandum, made by Mrs. Grattan, of the events at this period, and which I procured from her, will serve to throw some light on the subjects just alluded to, and will also present a faithful picture of those trying difficulties, from which good fortune and Providence alone enabled her and Mr. Grattan to escape. She observes:—

* On reading the report of this trial, the *certainty of* justice in an English court, contrasted with the *chance of* it at that period in an Irish one, is very striking. Here the jury were impartial, the judge unbiassed, and Mr O'Connor had ample justice done to him. A strong instance appeared in an attempt which had been made by a clergyman of the name of Young, to prejudice the jurors. He had written a letter, stating that he had "exerted all his eloquence with three of the jurymen to convince them how *absolutely necessary it was at the present moment that the felons should swing, and I urged them by all possible means in my power to hang them through mercy*, as a memento to others." This letter being produced, roused the indignation of Judge Buller, who presided, and who condemned in the severest manner the shameful proceeding, but he could not get the reverend offender within his jurisdiction, or he would have punished him as he deserved. O'Connor's examination of one of the witnesses was injudicious, and injurious to O'Coigley; in Ireland he possibly would have been convicted: the high character of those who gave evidence in his behalf, probably saved his life. These were, the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Suffolk, Lord John Russell, Lord Thanet, Lord Oxford, Lord Lauderdale, Messrs. Fox, Sheridan, Grattan, Erskine, Taylor, and Whitbread. I may here do to Sir Francis Burdett the justice to say, that at a period long subsequent, he came over to Ireland in a case of Roger O'Connor (brother to Arthur), and gave evidence in his favour at a trial in the county of Meath, whereby he was mainly instrumental in procuring his acquittal. Such is the unflinching spirit of men in a cause which they consider to be just. After the trial Arthur O'Connor was immediately arrested under a warrant from the Duke of Portland, and sent to Ireland.

"It was very fortunate for me that Mr. Grattan was sent for to England—if he had remained here, he certainly would have been put to death—the rebels would have seized him as they did Mr. Grogan,* or the Orangemen would have killed him. After he had gone to Maidstone, I remained alone at Tinnehinch—the people frightened me exceedingly, and behaved extremely ill. Some of the yeomen wanted to get money—one of them, * * *, *desired I should come to his house, and that he would show me proofs of Mr. Grattan's treason*—the conversations he had with the rebels, and the plan he had taken of the Dargle. I asked for the plan, and he said he had it not about him. He then asked me for money; however, I paid no attention to them. Another yeoman, * * *, took two of our horses, saying that he also† had proofs of Mr. Grattan's treason—he turned his stock into our grounds—destroyed our garden and an entire orchard of trees. At length Stevenson Blackwood came again—his kindness I can never forget: he told me it was 'necessary I should pretend to be ill and go to Bath, and keep Mr. Grattan with me, *for if he returned he certainly would be put to death!!*' [The reply was worthy the descendant of a Fitzgerald.] On this I told Stevenson, that in all my life I never stooped to any meanness or trick, and that certainly I should not do so now; that Mr. Grattan had not implicated

* Mr. Grogan belonged to one of the oldest and most respectable families in the county of Wexford: he was aged upwards of seventy, was weak and infirm, when he was forced by the insurgents into their ranks, and on pain of death was compelled to act *in the capacity of commissary;* for this he was taken up, tried, and executed. On the passing of the bill of attainder by which his large estates were confiscated, his innocence very clearly appeared, and after heavy legal expenses (near 10,000*l.* costs to (Lord Norbury) the attorney-general and the crown officers) the landed property was restored to the surviving brother.

Sir William Crosbie might also have been mentioned above; he too, was perfectly innocent of any disloyalty, but was taken when Wexford was attacked,—accused by wretched and terrified witnesses,—those who came to give evidence in his behalf were forcibly kept from the court by the military. The decision of the court martial was prompt, partial, and inexorable; the execution instantaneous. Both these unfortunate persons were most foully murdered.—See Lady Crosbie's Letter; that of Mr. Downes (chief justice); and the case published by her ladyship.

† On Mr. Grattan's return to Ireland, he applied to his law agent, Mr. Kemmis, the crown solicitor, and directed him to prosecute this person. Mr. Kemmis thought he ought to be punished, but advised Mr. Grattan not to prosecute, for, he said, if he did, *the jury would certainly acquit him.*

himself; but that if he *had violated the laws of his country, he must undergo the consequence.* Meantime Mr. Grattan was delayed in England, O'Connor's trial not coming on as early as he expected; he went from Maidstone to London,* and amused himself dining with Fox, Sheridan, and the Opposition. I shortly afterwards found affairs getting worse—I was extremely uncomfortable. Lord Powerscourt and Mr. (afterwards Lord) Monck, who commanded the yeomanry,—the former in particular,—gave orders to the corps not to injure the place, or frighten me. These orders they did not obey: at night I used to hear the sound of footsteps about the house, and I was kept in perpetual alarm. At last, one day, when I intended going to breakfast with my sister at the Black Rock, our postilion, a good and faithful creature, came to inform me that the Ancient Britons were to come down that night and surround the house—that I would be frightened—that something disagreeable might happen—and that I had better take my children away with me. The French governess, however, would not come—she was afraid the Ancient Britons would rob the house, and steal all that she had—so she was left with M. Mativet, the tutor. That night the Ancient Britons accordingly came; they searched the place, terrified the servants exceedingly, seized on our steward, beat him very much, and ill-treated him extremely: they suspected that he belonged to the United Party, and that he used to meet them in the Glen of the Downs at night;† however, they did not kill him, or put him to the

* A circumstance occurred here, which afforded some amusement to Mr. Grattan's friends. Mr. Lawless (afterwards Lord Cloncurry), who had been chairman at a meeting in Dublin that had passed some resolutions complimentary to Mr. Grattan, was at this time in London, and Mr. Grattan paid him a visit; just at that moment, and to their mutual surprise they were both arrested. Mr. Grattan was brought to the Privy Council, where, on enquiry, it appeared that Mr. Lawless had written to Ireland about O'Coigley, who wanted friends and money for his trial. And in mentioning the names of those who subscribed, he stated, "*Little Harry has put down 50l.* This letter falling into the hands of Government, they conceived the "Little Harry" meant Mr. Grattan. But the mistake was soon cleared up, as the individual in question was Mr. Henry of Straffan, who answered the description in name and figure.

† In a paper laid before Parliament, the list and names of the United Irish Committee, for the parish of Powerscourt, happened to be published, but the name of this individual does not appear among them; and, probably, it would have been inserted if, as the Ancient Britons supposed, he was one of the rebel officers.

torture. M. Mativet's* life was preserved by an instance of kindness not unusual among the lower orders of Irish—a poor woman, who used to receive some acts of kindness and charity at our house, overheard the soldiers talking about the Frenchman, '*and that half an hour's hanging would do him no harm!*' and, accordingly, they arranged to come to Tinnehinch at night, and seize him for that purpose. Luckily she informed him of their intentions, and put him on his guard. At first he determined to remain and defend himself—he prepared his pistols and his sword, and barricaded his room; but, as night came on, he thought it more prudent to seek some better place of safety, though he was very brave; 'for,' as he said, '*J'en aurois tué trois au moins*;' so he took refuge at the house of the serjeant of yeomanry, whom he knew he could depend on. He remained there that night, got a pass by his means, and the next day came off, as he said, '*bride abattue*,' to the Black Rock. He entered the room where we were, covered with dust and heat, and in a state of terror and exhaustion, exclaimed, '*Ah! Madame, ils allaient me pendre.*' Many people were now leaving the country; my residence grew very uncomfortable,† and I determined to join Mr. Grattan. With difficulty we obtained passports, and got to Holyhead, and took up our abode at Llanrwst, in North Wales."

* This person was tutor in Mr. Grattan's family for several years, and, as I recollect, his principles were certainly not republican; but he was a Frenchman and a Roman Catholic, and this was sufficient for the Ancient Britons and the Orangemen. He was a worthy and a virtuous man—moral and religious. On his return to his own country, he was elected professor at the College of Sorêze, in the south of France; but here he nearly fell a victim to his supposed attachment to Buonaparte, as he had at Tinnehinch, being called upon to serve in the army of the North. To avoid the Conscription, he had recourse to matrimony, as the least evil of the two; and, though an old man, he married a very young wife: thus he fell from *Scylla into Charybdis, and never afterwards forgot either Buonaparte or the Ancient Britons.*

† An instance of the meaning and process of *free-quarters* may here be given. At Mrs. Bermingham's there were about sixteen children, and with the elder branches, amounted to twenty-four in family; just as they were going to dine one day, a party of military came in, and proceeded without ceremony to appropriate to themselves the whole of the dinner. The establishment was of necessity thrown into confusion and dismay, and would probably have been left to fast for the next twenty-four hours if it had not fortunately happened that Mrs. Bermingham's eldest son entered at the time. He was in a corps of cavalry, a man of valour, courage, and high spirit; and seeing what the military were engaged

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Llanrwst, 27th June, 1798.

My dear M'Can;— * * * I got your letter—I don't ask about news—every thing looks melancholy. If any new publication comes out worth reading, send it to me.—I see advertised a pamphlet of Doctor Duigenan, in answer to me—let me have it—direct to Llanrwst, Conway.

Yours ever, H. Grattan.

MRS. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Dear Sir;—I am sure you will be glad to hear that we are all well. Mr. Grattan met us at Holyhead, and we have travelled on to this place seeking a lodging or house in vain. The country is beautiful, and we all enjoy it—it reminds us of Tinnehinch—and we walk much, as the weather is uncommonly fine—our abode is at the inn. If I had had time I should have seen you before I left Ireland, to take my leave—being truly your friend,

Henrietta Grattan.

After the proclamation by Government on the 30th of March, Sir Ralph Abercromby established his head-quarters at Kildare; and on the 3rd April he issued an order calling on the people to give up all their arms within ten days, and unless they did so, that troops would be sent among them in large bodies, to live at free quarters, and that other very severe measures would be used to enforce obedience to that notice, and the troops were authorized to act without waiting for the civil magistrate. These orders, it was said, were issued contrary to the real sentiments and the feelings of Sir Ralph Abercromby, and determined him to retire. He accordingly wrote to England, praying to be removed from the command of the army; and on the 25th of April, General Lake

in, he very speedily arrested their career, and sent them to the right about, and by his interference the house was cleared of these troublesome guests. When such things happened among the high, what must not have been the fate of those below! At Curran's seat, in the country, a number of soldiers came with their wives, many of whom promised to *lye-in at the Priory*, and he was forced to purchase their forbearance at no inconsiderable cost.

was appointed in his stead. The latter had acquired in the North more experience in these matters, and his proclamation of the year before had probably smoothed all scruples. Accordingly, orders still more extraordinary — more cruel—at once the height of wickedness and absurdity—were now issued; there is scarcely a parallel to them to be found in the history of any country. I have looked through the detail of Buonaparte's conquest of Italy in 1799, and the march of the French republicans, and in none of their orders is there to be found a proclamation similar to that which was now issued. It is to be observed, that this took place on the 7th of May, more than three weeks before the insurrection broke out in that quarter;—free quarters were not only to be continued, but the number of soldiers was to be doubled, trebled, and quadrupled upon the people, and *regular foraging parties sent out, until all the gentlemen of landed property and the collectors of public and church revenues reported that* ALL RENTS, TAXES, AND TITHES, WERE COMPLETELY PAID UP!!! It may truly be said of Lord Camden and Lord Clare's Government, "*quos Deus vult perdere prior dementat.*" This extraordinary document is subjoined,* and well might Sir Ralph Abercromby retire in disgust from the service of a Government that could act in such a manner.

*"Whereas, it has been reported to Lieutenant-General Sir James Stuart, that in some parts of the county, where it has been necessary to place troops at *free quarters for the restoration of public tranquillity*, that general subscriptions of money have been entered into by the inhabitants, to purchase provisions for the troops, by which means the end proposed of making *the burthen* fall as much as possible on the guilty, *is entirely defeated*, by making it fall in a light proportion on the whole; and thereby easing and protecting the guilty. It has been thought proper to *direct*, that, whenever the practice has been adopted, or shall be attempted, the general officers commanding divisions of the southern district, *shall immediately double, triple, and quadruple, the number of soldiers so stationed, and shall send out regular foraging parties*, to provide provisions for the troops, in the quantities mentioned in the former

The vacancies in the Leinster provincial committee, which had been occasioned by the arrests on the 12th of March, were speedily filled up; and the United party, irritated at the capture of so many of their friends, and disappointed in the expectation of foreign succour, grew impatient of any further delay, and forthwith urged that a precise time should be fixed on which the general rising should take place. Lord Edward Fitzgerald had remained concealed near Dublin: Government issued a large reward for his apprehension; but though he visited the city, and often exposed himself injudiciously, yet he eluded pursuit, and on more than one occasion had very singular and narrow escapes, for which he was sometimes indebted to the fidelity of females, who, in these and other instances during the insurrection, displayed a degree of feeling and of principle, as well as a miraculous taciturnity, which did honour to the sex.

At length the 23rd of May approached, which was the appointed time when the insurrection was openly to break out. Lord Edward came to the metropolis a few days previous, for the purpose of giving directions and making the necessary arrangements. So great was the fool-hardiness of some of his friends, that his military cap and green uniform were brought during day by a female, and delivered at the house where he lay concealed. He had been frequently visited by Neilson, who very incautiously used to ride in open day to the place of his retreat in the suburbs, heedless of discovery, and apparently forgetting that so remarkable a

notice, bearing date the 27th day of April, 1798; and that they shall move them from station to station, through the district or barony, *until all arms are surrendered, and tranquillity be perfectly restored, and until it is reported to the general officers, by the gentlemen holding landed property, and those who are employed in collecting the public revenues and tithes,* THAT ALL RENTS, TAXES, AND TITHES, ARE COMPLETELY PAID UP.

Adjutant-General's Office, Cork, May 7, 1798.

person both in manner and figure would have been closely watched. At the period of Lord Edward's last arrival in Dublin, he again visited him at the house in Thomas-street, where he still lay secreted, and which belonged to a person named Murphy, a leather-merchant. On the 19th of May, just after dinner, and immediately on Neilson getting up from table and leaving* the house, the officers of justice entered. Lord Edward having gone from the parlour, had retired up stairs to his room, and was lying on his bed with his coat off, when Major Swan and Captain Ryan came in. He started up at once, and rushing furiously on them, engaged in a desperate conflict. With a dagger he wounded them both severely, the latter mortally. He too suffered in the struggle, but was not overpowered, until Major Sirr coming up, fired from behind the door, hit Lord Edward in the shoulder, and disabled him. The military then rushed in, and interposing their muskets, prevented all further resistance, when a merciless drum-boy cut him on the neck with a sword. He was taken to the Castle, and thence removed to Newgate. The papers found upon him marked out the line of advance from the county of Kildare upon Dublin, and showed that the rising which had been apprehended was close at hand. Lord Edward lingered under the effects of his wounds till the 3rd of June, when he expired.

It is painful to be obliged to say, that Government acted towards this unfortunate individual not only with superfluous severity, but even with a strange degree of cruelty: he was debarred

* Neilson appears quite exonerated from the suspicion of having been concerned in the discovery of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's retreat. Mr. Moore's letter, and that of A. H. Rowan, in his Biography, together with the remark of the editor of the latter work, are conclusive on the subject. Neilson, though imprudent, was not dishonourable.—Moore's Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, vol. ii. p. 87; and Autobiography of H. Rowan, p. 434-437.

from the visits of his friends,—was closely guarded even by common soldiers standing at his bedside, and his nearest relations were refused admittance. Lord Camden displayed an unnecessary want of kindness, and almost of humane feeling, both towards him and his connexions. As executive magistrate, he permitted one of the United party (Clinch) to be executed close to the apartment in the jail where Lord Edward lay. The preparations for this man's death, which were distinctly heard by Lord Edward, threw him into a state of delirium, and for some time he was quite deranged. Lord Henry Fitzgerald came from England, and applied for leave to see his dying brother, but in vain. Lady Louisa Conolly (his aunt) also solicited Lord Camden, but without effect. Various and futile objections were made:—that a Privy Council must be summoned,—that an order must be procured from them, and that it was out of *his* power to accede to the request. Lady Louisa in vain implored him, and stated that while they were talking, her nephew might expire; at last she threw herself on her knees, and in a flood of tears, supplicated at his feet, and prayed that he would relent; but Lord Camden remained inexorable. Failing to move him, she went to the Chancellor, and here Lord Clare showed that he possessed a heart not quite devoid of every feeling of humanity. He at once said to her he could not grant any such permission, but that he would go in person. He hurried into her carriage, drove to the prison, and introduced her to Lord Edward's room. The unhappy man was then dying.* Lord Clare stood apart, while Lady

* After his death, a bill to attaint him and confiscate his property was introduced into Parliament and passed. Mr. Curran pleaded very ably against it in the House of Lords. The property was not considerable, and was subsequently allowed by the Crown to be re-purchased, in order that it might descend to the son. The act of attainder was reversed in 1819 by the Imperial Parliament—George the Fourth being Regent.

Louisa knelt and wept. What must have been the feelings of Lord Clare at this painful moment? How trying—how torturing the sight! thus forced to behold so afflicting a spectacle—the result in a great degree, of his own mal-administration! Expiring on the prison-couch, lay the descendant of one of the first families of Ireland—the noble and unfortunate victim whom a wicked policy, and crooked councils had thus hurried to a premature and inglorious grave! Close at his side knelt that exalted and lofty-minded virtuous lady who with such difficulty had procured this heart-rending indulgence,—closing with her own hand, his fading eye, and in broken accents addressing his decaying senses with that lingering, everlasting sweet farewell—

> "Oh, just beheld and lost,—admired and mourned,
> With gentlest manners, fairest arts adorned."

Let this melancholy story be a lesson to the descendants of those who have so long misgoverned Ireland, and teach them to avoid the example of their ancestors, and not endanger the safety of the empire by future misrule: they may then hope to receive the blessings instead of the execrations of posterity.

It is a satisfaction to be enabled to give this anecdote, which does credit to Lord Clare—its recital is due to him; it is also due to justice. Lord Henry Fitzgerald, afterwards complained bitterly of the conduct of the Irish Government, and when he had hurried from the melancholy scene, and was beyond their jurisdiction, he wrote from Holyhead a letter of severe reproach to Lord Camden. Mr. Moore, in the Life of Lord Edward, suppresses the strong passages, but their insertion would have been

The grounds for this measure, as stated by Lord Liverpool, were remarkable, not as a consequence of Royal clemency, but of the injustice of the case. There had been no trial; and the act not having passed till after the death of the party, the attainder could not have been regularly issued. The Duke of Wellington took that occasion to bear testimony to the brave, honourable, and excellent conduct of the son, who served under him in the Peninsular war.

well merited by the person to whom they so justly applied. So strong was the feeling entertained by that family against Lord Camden, that I well remember, many years subsequent, when a relation of mine was in London in company with one of their connexions, the latter turned away as Lord Camden approached to accost them, so indignant did the party feel at his conduct.

On the 22nd of May, Lord Castlereagh communicated to the House of Commons a message from Lord Camden, informing them that preparations were made by the disaffected party to attack the Metropolis, and that he had placed it under military law. Mr. John Claudius Beresford recommended that if any rebels were found with arms in their hands, they should be tried by a military tribunal, *and hanged at once.*

On the 25th, the Lord-lieutenant issued a proclamation, placing the kingdom under martial law, and directing the military *to punish with death, or otherwise, all* persons acting or assisting in any manner in the rebellion. On this occasion Col. Maxwell (afterwards Lord Farnham) stated "that as the principal leaders of the rebellion were in prison, the *military code should have a retrospect to them*—that they should be immediately tried under that code, *and disposed of as expeditiously as possible;*—that the bill introduced by the Attorney-general (Toler), to bring these men to a speedy trial, had yet *to pass the tedious process* of receiving the royal assent; this might take a fortnight or more; he therefore proposed to try those persons in prison by the military code, *and dispose of them at once.*"*

* The effects produced on the human mind by the horrifying scenes that civil war gives rise to, are often singular, and would puzzle the ablest mental anatomist to explain. Who would have thought that this individual would subsequently become a very grave and religious personage? He belonged to a class known by the name of the "*New Re-*

Such are the extremes into which, in times of civil commotion, men suffer themselves to be hurried! it is then only that they are tried, and that they show their disposition—too often appearing very different from what they really are; but these sanguinary sentiments, delivered in the senate, were the natural and necessary result of the system that had been introduced by its rulers. The mind grew habituated to torture out-of-doors, and the ear became familiarized to what the eye beheld; and hence, cruelty was not merely practised, but recommended. Another very remarkable case which occurred was that of the Archbishop of Dublin (Agar). A question arose in the Privy Council respecting these state-prisoners,—whether they should be executed or transported? The majority decided on the latter course; but one of the impediments to this was the Archbishop, whom the Council found very difficult to bring over to the side of mercy, for he insisted on having them all put to death. Feelings of this description are not peculiar to that Archbishop alone—for, unfortunately, it may be observed, that clergymen, when they become politicians, are by far the most violent; and theirs is the worst species of rage, for their profession protects them, and they can indulge their passions without fear, as they are out of the way of danger.

formation." Adverse to the religious opinions of the people, he sought to correct them to what in his conscience he believed to be the *True Faith*. His imagination was overheated, his understanding bewildered; — both perhaps occasioned by the violent proceedings that occurred at this period.

Another case of *penitence* I have heard related by Colonel Thompson, whose son was at that time in an English regiment in Ireland. Some prisoners, "*rebels*," he said, "*as they chose to call them*," were taken and hung on the arms of a windmill. On turning round the mill, one appeared loosely put up, when the military called out to him to sing *God save the King!* This so shocked the young soldier, that he could never divest his mind of the painful recollection, and he was so haunted by it, that he left the army, turned methodist, and assigned as a cause, this revolting exhibition.

Colonel Maxwell's proposition was not generally approved of, and even Lord Castlereagh here interposed, and "*implored that* his administration might not be branded with the imputation of cruelty; and he besought gentlemen *not to press a general and indiscriminate system of unnecessary vengeance!!*"

The progress from bloodshed to rapine is natural, customary, and almost instantaneous;—it was found so in Ireland before—it was attempted here again. Hence, in a few weeks after the first suggestion of Mr. John Claudius Beresford, he very gravely rose to submit another, and moved to bring in *a bill to confiscate the property* of persons convicted of high treason by courts martial. Mr. Isaac Corry said he wished to extend the object, and apply it to persons who held leasehold interests as well as estates in fee. This savoured rather too much of *olden times*, and it seemed injudicious to revive this short and ancient method of acquiring property in Ireland. Accordingly, Lord Castlereagh once more interfered, and conjured Mr. Beresford not to urge such a measure, as it would be time enough when called for by necessity.

Thus the proposal of extermination as well as confiscation was abandoned; but when sentiments such as these could be uttered in Parliament, how could it be expected that a licentious soldiery should act in any other but in the most cruel manner?* Prior indeed to the outbreak on the

* The following appeared in the Dublin papers:—"A number of inhabitants, *many of them very decent persons*, were taken up yesterday (the 21st of May) on information *or suspicion of being United Irishmen*. Several, against whom strong informations were received, *underwent whipping to extort confession*: in some instances we learn *this was attended with the desired effect!!*"

A dispatch from a military officer to the government, from Naas, on the 24th of May, states, "that three men *with green cockades* were brought in yesterday, all of whom were hanged in the public streets!"

23rd of May, the military in the county of Kildare had proceeded to carry into execution, in the severest way, the orders of the Generals, by burning the peasants' houses in order to procure arms. Thus the innocent and the guilty were confounded together, and on the 21st of May parts of the villages of Maynooth, Kilcock, and Celbridge, were consumed. A Scotch regiment was on free quarters in the latter, and threatened every day to burn the entire place. This conduct is described by an eye-witness; and in Moore's Life* of Lord Edward Fitzgerald will be found the letters of Lady Louisa Conolly, who then resided at Castletown, close to Celbridge; and in giving the melancholy detail, she states, "*The peasants say they may as well die with a pike in their hands as be shot at their work in the fields!*"

These calamities were not peculiar to the county of Kildare, and a relation of mine who resided in the county of Wicklow, (John Blachford,* of Altadore,) who was then in the yeomanry, assured me that on going out one morning from Lord Powerscourt's, where they were stationed, he saw the houses of the peasantry burning in all directions; and in a circuit of eight miles from thence, towards the village of Roundwood, not a human being was to be seen; he found some countrymen shot, and he asked the yeomen why they were killed. The yeomen could assign no reason, but that they had set their houses on fire, and shot them as they were running away! On one occasion, the yeomen had shot two of the country people, and three men of his corps had *ill-used* an unfortunate female in the neighbourhood; upon which he com-

* Vol. ii. p. 95-100.

† Brother to Mrs. Henry Tighe, authoress of Pysche and other beautiful poems. He was one of the best of the Irish country gentlemen; he was an independent, a humane, and public-spirited character, possessed an accomplished mind, and a classical taste.

plained, in very strong terms, to the captain, and insisted on having the offenders made examples of, and punished as they deserved; but the reply he got was remarkable:—"*The crime is great; but consider the times,* my dear sir;—*it would be dangerous to punish the yeomanry!*" This was the error throughout. However, a remarkable opinion, very different from this, and worthy of being recorded, was given shortly after by high and unquestionable authority,—the gallant and ever-to-be-lamented General Sir John Moore.* He was at this period serving in Ireland, and in the report which he then gave to the Lord Lieutenant on the county of Wicklow, and on the quiet state to which he had brought it towards the end of the year, adds, "That the presence of troops may be necessary for some time longer, but it would be more to check the yeomanry and the Protestants than the people."

The insurrection broke out on the 23d of May,† at Kildare, on the 25th at Carlow, on the 26th at Wexford, and on the 29th in the North, in the county of Down; and it may be said to have been suppressed about the end of June, when Government issued a proclamation of pardon. It is to be observed that the West, the province of Connaught, remained comparatively tranquil. In the North, the insurgents did not come forward with the activity that it might be supposed they would have done, when it is considered they had originated and ex-

* Such effect did these scenes produce on the mind of Sir John Moore, that in a conversation he had upon the subject with Mr. Grattan, he said, "*If I were an Irishman, I should be a rebel.*"

† Lord Castlereagh thought very lightly of the disturbances in the South; but when those in the North broke out, he sent for his private secretary, (Mr. Knox) and told him "*that heavy business would come on,*—that as his health was delicate, he might suffer in consequence, and that he was at liberty to leave him." Mr. Knox did so; the fact was, that he was a humane and merciful man, quite averse to the system pursued by the Government. He resided afterwards for a long time at Mr. Peter La Touche's, at Bellvue, in the county of Wicklow.

tended this insurrection. Numbers had been disarmed, several had been arrested, and others, now finding that a good deal of religious prejudice was prevalent among the insurgents in the South, were disinclined to the cause, and relaxed their efforts; and after two inconsiderable actions on the 9th and 15th of June, at Saintfield and Ballynahinch,* they withdrew from the struggle, and left to their fate the insurgents of the South, whom they had inveigled, and whom Tone and Neilson stated they had reluctantly induced to join the Confederation. The principal actions were those of Prosperous and Kilcullen, in the county of Kildare; Hackettstown, Arklow, in the county of Wicklow; Gorey, New Ross, Vinegar Hill, in the county of Wexford; the storming of Enniscorthy; the capture of the town of Wexford; and the action at Tara Hill, in the county of Meath. Wexford was the only place where the insurgents had a temporary success, and the town remained in their possession for a considerable time. At Carlow and New Ross they were unsuccessful, and at Vinegar Hill they were defeated with very great loss. There were several inconsiderable battles, but few regular engagements. The insurgents fought in general bravely, but without concert or discipline, or any systematic plan of operations. They had no practised generals, and on neither side was any military skill or tactics displayed. Among the insur-

* General Nugent commanded the troops in the North, and in the month of June he issued a proclamation calling upon the insurgents to lay down their arms, which he concludes in the following sanguinary and savage manner:—"Should the above injunctions not be complied with, Major-General Nugent *will proceed to set fire to and totally destroy the town of Killaleagh, Ballynahinch, Saintfield, Killinchy, and every cottage and farm-house in the vicinity of these places, and put every one to the sword* who may be found in arms: it behoves all well-affected persons to exert themselves to have these terms complied with, as it is the only opportunity there will be of rescuing themselves and properties *from the indiscriminate vengeance of an army necessarily let loose upon them.*"

gents there were numerous cases of individual valour and devoted courage. The persons of distinction who fell on the side of the loyalists were Colonel Walpole and Lord Mountjoy;—the former lost his life through his own imprudence and want of military skill. The official reports announced the numbers slain:* at Tara there were 400; at Ross, 130; at Stratford on Slany, 200; Kilcullen, 130, *no prisoners;* Hackettstown, 500; Dunlavin, 300. The proceedings at Wexford were sanguinary and barbarous; in that county, however, the contest was best maintained, owing, in some degree, to the knowledge of fire-arms and a peculiarly long gun which the peasantry used in their sporting excursions.

Although the operations of the insurgents were desultory, and their plans ill-arranged, it so happened that the city of Dublin was nearly surprised and taken by them, and their project was discovered and baffled in the following singular and fortuitous manner:—Two of the chiefs had rode early one morning to a respectable and wealthy farmer in the county of Wexford, in order to induce him to join them. During their conversation they disclosed their plan of advance along the coast to Dublin; except at Arklow, there was scarce any stronghold on the line; the way lay open along the sea, and the march upon Dublin would have been easily accomplished, as the military were mostly in a distant part of the country, and the insurgent force coming from Wexford exceeded 30,000 men. The brother of the person from whom I got the anecdote, happening to be present, concealed himself in the farmer's house, through fear of detection, and overheard the con-

* It is not easy to ascertain the numbers that perished. Some writers state the loss during these civil commotions at 20,000 on the Government side, and 50,000 on that of the people. Many were killed who were not insurgents.

versation. On the departure of the chiefs and their party, he wrote out a statement of the occurrence, secured it inside his shoe, and proceeded with every expedition across the country, till he delivered it to the next military commander. Upon the receipt of this intelligence in Dublin, every possible exertion was made, and every sort of soldier on every sort of vehicle was dispatched from the metropolis. The battle of Arklow, however, arrested the progress of the insurgents, and probably saved the city.

On the return of the military from this expedition, part of them passed Tinnehinch, and halted on the bridge in front of the house. Some of the party proposed to destroy it; the cannon was planted, and they debated whether the house should be blown down; however, they first put it to the vote, and fortunately the majority was against the measure, so the artillery was ordered to pass on. The officer who commanded it, and who related the anecdote, very candidly admitted that* he had voted for the proposal.

In times of such commotion, generous as well as ignoble actions are to be found on both sides; but it were natural to expect that the former class would have been practised and recommended by the loyalist party, who were better educated and better informed than their opponents, and more capable, therefore, of keeping their passions under control, and able to show a better example. There were some fine traits of character displayed by the insurgents, that are worthy of being mentioned; and among others, by the two Wicklow

* Several years afterwards this individual waited upon Mr. Grattan with an address of congratulation on his escape at an election riot that occurred in Dublin, where he had received some slight injury. So very easy it has been in all times in Ireland for Government to *halloo* one man and one party against the other, and so much more wise it is to effect their reconciliation.

chieftains, Holt and Dwyer. The former had made prisoners on one occasion of some soldiers and their wives; he spared their lives, protected their persons, and sent them safe back to their quarters. On another occasion some of his men strongly pressed him to plunder a house in the vicinity where they lay encamped; Holt not only refused, but prevented others from attempting it;* his words were remarkable:—"I have been driven," said he, "into this business; my house was burned, and my property destroyed—*I may be a rebel, but will never be a robber!*" Dwyer was a handsome, intelligent man, and a person of considerable influence among the peasantry; his men having committed some devastation on the woods of a gentleman near Wicklow, Dwyer sent to him requesting an interview; when they met, this person addressed Dwyer, saying, "I suppose you want me to intercede for you with Government. I'll do all I can for you, as I find you have not been sanguinary." Dwyer said, "*No!—if I were to get a crown of gold, I would not supplicate for pardon;* but I wish to let you know, that the depredations that my men committed on your property were without my knowledge, and shall not occur again." Some time after, they were renewed, when Dwyer seized the men that committed them, sent them off to Government, and they were immediately hanged. Mr. Peter Burrowes was the prosecuting counsel against him, and in addition to these anecdotes, he stated, that when Dwyer was tried, such was the respect entertained for him, that a soldier walked all the way from Cork to Wicklow in order to give evidence in his favour. It appeared that some of

* Holt surrendered himself to Lord Powerscourt; through the interest of Mrs. La Touche he was kindly treated and was banished to New South Wales. After many years' absence he returned to Ireland, and set up in business at Kingstown, near Dublin, where he died. His Memoirs are not without some degree of interest.

Dwyer's party were going to kill one of his companions, when Dwyer rushed up with his sword drawn, drove back his men, and saved the soldier's life. These traits of humanity preserved him: he was sentenced to transportation, but he died on board, previous to the departure of the vessel.

When such noble traits as these are found among the undisciplined, the unlettered, and the middling class of men, how great must be the shame and indignation with which we read the wicked acts of the Government, and of those in authority under them?

Mr. Peter Burrowes,* who was well acquainted with the events of this period, often related the following circumstance. He was professionally called on to advise an action against Judkin Fitzgerald, High Sheriff of the county of Tipperary; he prepared the legal proceedings, and stated that Fitzgerald had ordered a gentleman of that county to bring him 1000*l.*, and unless it was forthcoming on a certain day, *that he would be flogged.* The man was obliged to procure the money, and thus avoided the threatened punishment. Fitzgerald was then called on to repay him; but not finding this very easy, he applied to Lord Castlereagh. The sum was then set down as a charge for arms, or accoutrements, (something which Mr. Burrowes said was wholly ludicrous,) and to his knowledge, the 1000*l.* was actually repaid by the Government. Part only of

* Mr. Burrowes' humanity and spirit exposed him on one occasion to some danger. Passing Stephen's Green, not far from the house of Lord Clare, he was attracted by cries proceeding from a quarter adjacent; he there saw an officer (brother of Arthur O'Connor) presiding over the flogging of two men. Burrowes remonstrated with him, and upbraided him severely. The soldiers were angry, passed round Burrowes, and began to threaten him: he was in uniform and armed, and remained firm, and succeeded. At length O'Connor, who had been reading some papers, exclaimed—"I have been deceived—*the men are innocent;* take that old villain the informer, and put him in their place!!"

this case was on record; but that of Wright against Fitzgerald, in which the former recovered damages against the sheriff for flogging him, will ever remain in proof to show the character of those who were encouraged and protected by the Government. Wright was a French teacher, and a *note written in that language, which the loyalist did not comprehend*, was the cause of this savage punishment being inflicted on him.

Pending these great calamities that desolated and laid waste the country, not physically merely, but morally, the friends of Ireland in the British Parliament were not silent nor insensible, and, far from forgetting their duty, they brought forward once more her deplorable state; and on the 14th of June, Mr. Sheridan moved for an inquiry into the causes of the insurrection in Ireland; but it was rejected by a great majority—199 to 43; and the address* to His Majesty upon the subject,

* "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to submit our opinion to his Majesty, that the deplorable state of Ireland calls for an immediate and total change of councils and measures in that kingdom: that if the system of coercion, enforced in the manner it has been, should succeed to the full extent of the most sanguine expectations of those who have advised it, the conquest of a desert is all that can be obtained by it; and that Ireland, so reduced, and so desolated, can no way be preserved but by a continued waste of the wealth and strength of Great Britain, for which no other return from that country can be rationally expected but implacable hatred, waiting for revenge. That if these measures fail, the possibility of which no wise government would leave out of its calculation, Ireland will not merely be lost, but may become an accession to the power of France, and England be exposed to the issue of a contest, on English ground, not for acquisition or dominion, but probably for existence.

"We should fail in the duty we have undertaken, if we did not, at the same time, express to your Majesty our absolute conviction, that no change of system in Ireland would be effectual to its purposes, without a removal of those persons whose councils have produced the present calamities, and who cannot in reason be considered as capable of correcting their own errors, or of attempting it with sincerity; and whose past conduct, both in practice and profession, renders it impossible for them, even were they to act on a sincere conviction of past error, to raise an expectation in Ireland of such a Government, on temperate principles, as might dispose the people to submit to the regular and indispensable restraints of justice administered according to law, or

which he likewise proposed, was also negatived. The Duke of Leinster moved an address somewhat similar in the Lords; and, as if the members were afraid that the report of the conduct of Mr. Pitt and the Irish Government should obtain publicity, Lord Sydney cleared the house, and declared that if any person presumed to publish an account of their proceedings, he hoped the House would punish him in the severest manner. The motion was rejected by 51 to 18.

In the month of June, Lord Cornwallis came to Ireland as successor to Lord Camden. The latter had prepared the way for the projects of the former;—he came to finish what the other began—he came to carry the Union,—he came on a mission which no man of honour should have undertaken—no man of character attempted,—to destroy the constitution of a free country. He strove to be impartial, to protect the Catholics, and to restrain* the Orangemen; but the former did not trust, and the latter did not like him.

On the 17th of July, Lord Castlereagh delivered to Parliament a message from His Majesty, expressing his desire to exercise his prerogative of mercy, and pass an Amnesty bill, which shortly after was carried into effect. The leading persons concerned in the insurrection thought it was now advisable to make the best terms they could with the Government. It appears that they wished to save the lives of two of their party—Oliver Bond

even to accept of concessions without distrust, or of benefits with gratitude.

"Nothing, in our opinion, but a total change of men, as well as measures, can prevent the otherwise certain alienation, and more than possible separation of that country from Great Britain."

* In the case of Woolaghan, where an unfortunate peasant boy was shot almost in the arms of his mother, he directed that the President of the court-martial before whom the yeoman was tried and acquitted, should never in future be allowed to sit on another, and most severely condemned such wicked proceedings.

and W. J. Byrne. Accordingly, Mr. Dobbs, a member of Parliament, a man of a singular turn of mind, but of a kindly disposition, undertook to intercede on their behalf. He procured a written paper, signed by seventy of the state prisoners, declaring that they would give all the information in their power respecting the proceedings of the United Irishmen,—that they would consent to emigrate to some foreign country (as should be agreed on by Government) not at war with Great Britain, and give security not to return. Bond and Byrne were to have the benefit of this arrangement,* though under sentence of death; the latter, however, was executed, the former died suddenly in prison. After much delay, evasion, and recrimination, the arrangement was effected, and a detailed *memoire* of the origin and progress of the insurrection was given to Government, signed by Emmett, O'Connor, and M'Nevin. However, the Government subsequently put upon the agreement an interpretation very different from that of the prisoners, and contended that they should not be liberated during the war; and they were ultimately sent to Fort George,† where they remained for a great length of time.

This arrangement had just been effected, and the disturbances had begun to subside, when a part of the succour from France arrived. About one thousand men, commanded by General Humbert, escaping the vigilance of the British fleets, landed in the month of August in Killala Bay. They captured the town, taking prisoners the bishop and

* Arthur O'Connor's Letter to Lord Castlereagh from prison, Jan. 4, 1799.

† On the 18th of March, 1799, the King issued a proclamation, stating, that persons engaged in the treasonable conspiracy in Ireland had not abandoned their designs, and that no one should pass from Ireland to Great Britain without a passport from the authorities. He communicated this to the British Parliament, and also sent a message, stating, that in *consequence of the representations of the Lord-lieutenant,*

his family, defeated the Royal troops under General Lake and Lord Hutchinson, took all their artillery, and fearlessly advanced towards the metropolis. Upon this, Lord Cornwallis assumed the command of the army, and with 20,000 men marched in person against the French, who, though mustering not more than 900 men, had already proceeded almost to the centre of the kingdom. They met at Ballynahinch; an action there took place, after which they surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Some of the peasantry and some of the militia had joined them, but not in any very great numbers.

Thus ended an abortive insurrection and a posthumous invasion, both of which ruined the kingdom.

Mr. Grattan had retired to England, but was not allowed to remain there in tranquillity. Dr. Duigenan published a pamphlet, in which he inveighed against him. It was rather a long satire, comprising 200 pages: it attacked the Catholics, contained great abuse of Ireland, and adulation of England. It had been sent to London for publication the year before (1797), but the printer prudently returned it, and at length it made its appearance. Mr. Grattan, upon this, came back to Dublin; he sought for Doctor Duigenan, but in vain; and now he found party spirit raged so very fiercely against him, that even his appearing in the streets was a matter of danger, and a confidential friend advised him to be on his guard, and get some one to accompany him. This he found not very easy to do; and such was the mutability of fortune, that the man who had assisted in giving liberty to his country, and from a province raised her to a nation,

he had directed that the persons in custody in Dublin and Belfast should be removed to Great Britain, and confined in Fort George.

It is to be observed, that of all these prisoners, only three were Roman Catholics, the rest were Protestants or Presbyterians.—See Appendix, No. 6.

promoting her trade and constitution, was left with scarcely a supporter, and even walked at some risk in the streets of his native city. He went to Curran; but Curran said he was such an object of dislike to Government, and so marked a man, that it would be better for him not to take any further part, and accordingly left Mr. Grattan at his house in Ely-place, and retired to his residence at Rathfarnam. His early friend (Mr. Cuffe, afterwards Lord Tyrawly) was applied to, but he was connected with Government; he held a place under them, and when he found that Mr. Grattan resolved to meet Duigenan, he said he could no longer stay with him. However, one honest, faithful, and fearless friend, appeared; this was Mr. Richard Grace, a gentlemen of the Queen's County, who had been in the Irish Parliament, was educated for the bar, a man of great courage, and warmly attached to Mr. Grattan. To him Mr. M'Can applied; and when he heard of Mr. Grattan's arrival, and how he was situated, he lost not a moment, but at once sallied forth to meet him. He offered his services, and expressed his willingness to accompany Mr. Grattan where-ever he pleased. Accordingly, they walked toge-ther three or four days, but no where could they meet with Doctor Duigenan. Mr. Grattan was then advised to write to him, and if he could get neither a reply nor a meeting, to take no farther notice of the learned Doctor. Accordingly, the following letter was delivered: —

MR. GRATTAN TO DOCTOR DUIGENAN.

Dublin, 7th August, 1798.

Mr. Grattan has seen a very gross, a very unprovoked, and a very ludicrous performance, written against him, and signed "Patrick Duigenan." Mr. Grattan does not explain his conduct to individuals; the statute book and the Jour-nals of the House of Commons are open. Were he to make his public conduct a subject of explanation, it would

not be to such a person as Doctor Duigenan; but as the above mentioned attack mixes in its folly much personal rudeness, Mr. Grattan judges it not wholy beneath him to take some sort of notice of it; and he is very sorry to be forced to observe, that the author has departed from the manners and language of a gentleman, and has thought proper to adopt a strain so false, so vile, and so disgusting, as to render Dr. Duigenan a public buffoon, too low and ludicrous to give an affront or make an apology.

P.S. Mr. Grattan remains in Dublin for three days, and is to be heard of at Kearns's Hotel, Kildare-street.

No answer whatever being sent to this, Mr. Grattan determined on returning to England; but he wished once again to visit Tinnehinch; and though unwell and suffering much from a severe nervous complaint, he left Dublin very early, on foot and unaccompanied; but here again he was destined to meet with some danger. The news of his arrival quickly circulated. As he was sitting in the parlour, two cavalry soldiers rode up to the door with drawn sabres, knocked somewhat roughly, and calling for the servant in a rude and violent manner, *desired him to send out Mr. Grattan to them.* The servant was somewhat alarmed, and having brought in the message, Mr. Grattan laid a case of pistols on the table, and sent his reply "to beg the *gentlemen* would walk in." This answer having been delivered, and perhaps some friendly intimation from the servant of what might be expected, the soldiers departed. Mr. Grattan then returned to England, but here a greater annoyance awaited him.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. M. BERWICK.

London, 19th Sept., 1798.

Doctor Berwick;—So far we have advanced—*qui bene incipit.* I could have wished you had employed me on a commission to purchase for you books of divinity in London. You cannot conceive what bargains I could have gotten at every stall, at the corner of every street—Fathers of the Church—Sermons—controversial Theology—almost for nothing—Dr. Clarke himself, and his Attributes. I

cannot conceive books of such immense value and size can be so cheap—you can resolve me—I dare say some of Doctor O'Beirne's* Charges to the Clergy may have taken their stations there. Is there any Act of Parliament to punish a clergyman who buries a labourer that has been shot?—I am glad we are at ease about the French—I can't say I had even the most distant idea that they would have any consequence, save that of momentary alarm. Nine hundred men, (Hardy says, and says with that scorn which becomes the fattest subject his Majesty has,)—lean miserable men—could not overthrow a Government supported by a military establishmsnt of 100,000. Lord Carhampton could have sent them all aboard a tender, in the capacity of a justice of peace, without terrifying them in his military capacity of Lieutenant-General. I believe he has sent as many, and his conquests have been extended to as great a number—conquests, too, completed in his own person, and in his own room. However, Lord Cornwallis seems to have acted with great propriety and discretion, and left nothing to accident, or to the possible errors of his officers: his proclamation of pardon afterwards surely deserves praise. But to come to family matters—to descend, in short, from war—from cannon—How is your wife? Ollum,† how is he? I hear that Lady Granard's system of conciliation has tended more to keep her neighbourhood quiet, than Lord Clare's laws, or General Lake's arms.—Here there is no news—they talk of war between France and the empire, but they don't know—nor of Buonaparte, except that he has escaped them.

Yours, H. GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

21*st Sept.*, 1798.

DEAR M'CAN;—I got the draft, and thank you. There is no news. I thank you for mentioning the report—I got it. Hughes's charge is ridiculous; 'tis impossible he can be believed. I should despise any thing he should say of me, even though it were not contradicted; but here it is contradicted by the person who must know best.

Yours, most truly, H. GRATTAN.

* This individual was appointed Bishop of Meath. He had been a great admirer of Lord Fitzwilliam; had waited on him with addresses on his visit in Ireland in 1795; but he had now *relapsed*, and was a supporter of the opposite party,—forgetful of his benefactors.

† An old gardener, who used to take much pride in exhibiting his flowers and roses, of which Mr. Grattan was particularly fond.

On the 17th of July, 1798, Lord Castlereagh presented to the House of Commons various papers relating to the late conspiracy, which were referred to a secret committee; and a report upon them was made on the 30th of August: it detailed the former reports of 1793 and 1797, and stated the proceedings and plans of the conspirators; the application for aid to France; the intention to set up a republican form of Government, and overthrow the existing one: it set forth the papers found with the conspirators at the time of their arrest; and concluded with the evidence of Emmett, O'Connor, M'Nevin, Neilson, and that of Hughes, the Government spy. The report made by the House of Lords differed from that of the Commons, inasmuch as the evidence given by Neilson was not the same, and that of Hughes was altogether omitted. These persons stated they had visited Tinnehinch in the month of April—Hughes fixed the 28th as the precise day—and he asserted that Neilson told him he had there sworn Mr. Grattan a United Irishman.

It happened that at that time he was in England!! Thus the spy was answered by the fact, and positively contradicted by Neilson, who denied ever having stated he had sworn Mr. Grattan. The Speaker (Foster),* who was on the committee, very properly objected to the insertion of Hughes's evidence in the report of the Commons; but Lord Clare introduced it in the Lords, though perfectly aware that the charge was false, and that Mr. Grattan was not in Ireland at the time stated, and pretty certain that he was not a United Irishman; however, he wished to excite the suspicion, and circulate the impres-

* Mr. James Corry, an intimate friend of Mr. Foster, assured me on his part of the accuracy of this statement, and requested my attention to the difference that exists between the reports.

sion. The fact of the *alibi* was notorious; and the glaring perjury of Hughes was certain to be discovered on the slightest reference to dates; but party rage ran so high, that it was not possible for Mr. Grattan to escape* from its blind and inconsiderate fury; accordingly, his name was erased from the list of privy councillors—he was disfranchised by the corporation of Dublin, the guild of merchants, and the corporation of Derry; and his picture was taken down from the walls of the University of Dublin.

Neilson at this time was in prison; and hearing how his evidence had been mis-reported, sent his wife to a relation of Mr. Grattan's (the Reverend Richard Bermingham), and she informed him that her husband had desired her to say that the report of his evidence was quite erroneous,—that it had been garbled as well as suppressed; that he had informed the committee that Mr. Grattan knew nothing of their plans; that they had not disclosed them to him — and that there was scarcely a person from whom they were more anxious to conceal them. Not satisfied with this, Neilson contrived to make a written communication to Mr. Grattan, which he did in the following manner.

There was an individual of the name of William

* The risks that were then incurred, and the little chance of escape, may be judged of from this, and from the following occurrence:

Many years afterwards, when Mr. Hardy was in company with Mr. Grattan at Tinnehinch, he produced a paper, which he said, if discovered at the time, might have cost him his life. It was the list of the insurgent force in the county of Wicklow. Mr. Hardy had got it from Lord Monck, who commanded the yeomanry. He had taken a copy of it, and shown it to Mr. Grattan who forgot to return it. They seemed to think that not only Hardy, but both of them would have been hanged, and it is probable that if the Ancient Britons, in their nocturnal visits, had found it, they would not have required any corroborating evidence to warrant their very summary executions. This shows the hazard as well as the horrors of such times, and should make men most cautious before they decide upon the fate of their fellow-creatures; still more before they execute them.

Dowdall, a natural son of Hussey Burgh. The distinguished part that Burgh had taken on behalf of the liberties of his country at the period of the Revolution in 1782, has been already stated: for him and for his memory, Mr. Grattan entertained the warmest affection. Dowdall was a young man of pleasing figure, good address, and an interesting manner; he had been well educated, and was not deficient in information; he was ardent and enthusiastic,—a great admirer of his father's principles, and those also of Mr. Grattan. He used to attend the debates in Parliament, and assist at the meetings of the Whig Club, and he held a situation in the office of Mr. Foster, when Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was said that Mr. Grattan, through his means, had received some papers connected with the public accounts, which he had made use of in a debate in the House of Commons. This was considered an unpardonable offence by Government, and in consequence he was dismissed from his situation. Whether this was the real cause, or used merely as a pretext, mattered little in the opinion of Mr. Grattan, and he conceived himself bound in honour to allow him an annuity of forty guineas* a-year:—hence, a greater interest arose in whatever concerned Mr. Grattan. The ardour of his liberal principles, unsubdued by his dismissal, and, perhaps his imprudence, had caused him to be suspected; and after the trial of O'Connor, at Maidstone, which he attended, he was arrested. Being confined in the same prison with Neilson, he learned from him the real statement as to the report of the secret committee, and he communicated it to Mr. Grattan. His letter will show what little chance of justice any one had in those times, and from those governors.

* This is particularly mentioned here, as it led to future proceedings in 1803, and to the arrest of Mr. Grattan's agent.

WILLIAM DOWDALL TO MR. GRATTAN.

Dublin, 6th Oct. 1798.

SIR,—Perhaps nothing can surprise you more than a line from me, as I imagine you have concluded me long since hanged; but I have the misfortune to tell you that I am still in the land of the living; to heighten my misfortune—that land Ireland—my present residence Newgate.

All the persecution and threats I have experienced for more than four months past, had no terrors for me. I looked for nothing so anxiously as the accomplishment of their worst threat. To hear the progressive destruction of my country in an English dungeon,* aggravated as it was by English relaters, you will naturally suppose left me a heart not much at ease; but nothing, my dear Mr. Grattan, could equal what I felt from the villanous attempts I found making by your enemies, to implicate you in the late unfortunate business. On this head I had not one moment's peace of mind till I came to this prison, and learned from Samuel Neilson himself the particulars of his examination. I find it has been miserably carved and patched to answer their own views; every artifice was used by the Chancellor and Speaker to implicate you, which, when he perceived, he named you himself, positively asserting you were not a United Irishman to his knowledge, nor did he believe you such; that he made use of every argument to bring you forward in some manner, to save the country, as you were at that time so completely popular, that he never pointed out any particular manner to you, and that nothing could induce you to take any part, as you could not see a clear course to steer, by which the country might be saved from tyranny on the one hand, or anarchy on the other. He also stated that the plan of reform prepared by you (called Mr. Ponsonby's) would have satisfied the North at the time. That the Opposition then had a right to think they had the support of the people, as several copies of it were sent to the different leaders and influential persons in Leinster and Ulster, in order to receive their alterations, for the purpose of incorporating them into a general plan, which plan, so altered, they returned to you. In a word, he did every thing to convince them that the measures proposed by your party would have saved the country two years ago, and that you had no

* He had been imprisoned in England.

manner of connexion with their latter system of separation. They, on the other hand, not only endeavoured to avoid all his opinions and conclusions on this head (still aiming at implicating you), but have, in many instances, misstated such parts of his evidence as they thought proper to give. On the whole, he says the committee seemed convinced of your ignorance of the proceedings of the United Irishmen, and the majority of them were delicate in questions relating to you.

I have declined signing the conditions agreed on between Government and the other prisoners, as no consideration will ever induce me to consent to any examination, however speciously it may be pretended that I shall not be required to name persons.* I entirely and completely disapprove of the compromise, and, therefore, take it for granted that I shall remain a prisoner for a long, long time, if they have not a Reynolds, a Hughes, or some other well trained hero, to release me from my sufferings.

I hope Mrs. Grattan and you find perfect health in England; that you may long continue to do so, and be happy, is the first wish of your sincerely devoted Servant,

WM. DOWDALL.

I send you a letter of Neilson's, wherein he gives the examination as it should stand; but states none of the conversation about Opposition, as the report takes no notice of it. I have, however, above stated the purport.

SAMUEL NEILSON TO MR. GRATTAN.

New Prison, Oct. 5, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR;—At the request of my friend, Dowdall, I write to you. I should have done so long since, but for two reasons,—interception and implication. I, therefore, requested our mutual friend, Curran, to do so for me. Never was misrepresentation more vile than that put into my mouth by *the Report*. I will state, as near as I can possibly recollect, the sum of my examination before the committee, so far as related to you:—

Question.—Were you ever at Tinnehinch?—Yes.

Q.—About the time of Bond's arrest?—Yes.

Q.—Is it fair to ask what brought you there.—*Yes.* And, now, before we go further, I wish to state, that I see

* This was one of the stipulations made by Emmett and O'Connor, &c.; a very useless one, and if taken together with the loosely worded agreement, shows what very bad men of business they were.

you are pointing (contrary to our agreement) at an individual—Mr. Grattan. I can safely say, on my oath, that *he* had no concern in *our* transactions; but I will never say one word of any other person, or that can implicate any, because a refusal might be construed into a silent accusation.

Q.—We mean nothing against Mr. Grattan; but were you not there in company with a certain gentleman?—I don't recollect being ever there in company, but with Bond and Mr. Sweetman.

Q.—Never with any other?—Not to my recollection. I was in the habit of paying visits to every gentleman who resided in the neighbourhood where I then resided, and Mr. G. among the rest.

Q.—Did you never swear him an United Irishman?—Never.

Q.—Did you ever say you did?—I am not accustomed to falsehood.

Q.—Now, Mr. Neilson, did you not press Mr. G. to come forward?—Yes.

Q.—Did you use any arguments?—Yes; I saw the country likely to be shipwrecked on anarchy, or despotism, and I wished that such men as those who had political talent, and public opinion, should take an active part.

Q.—Did he refuse?—Yes.

Q.—Upon what ground?—That he did not see any way clear to save the country.

This, my dear sir, is the sum of what passed, and almost *verbatim*. May you yet save a country which I am obliged to part from with regret. Ever yours,

SAMUEL NEILSON.

I omitted to state, that on my return, a gentleman, before whom I related the outline of my examination to my friend Bond, and my regret that any person should insinuate to *me reservations*,—he, a person in confidence, told me not to be uneasy on that score, as he knew their object was to find out the veracity of another person. I instantly recollected that Hughes and I had been there, and I flew to write to the Chancellor to that effect, without ever stating one single word more.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. RICHARD BERMINGHAM.

Oct. 23*d*, 1798.

MY DEAR B.;—I got your letter.—It had been, like my

other, opened. The Guild of Merchants have made themselves a set of blockheads. I wish to see the copy of the Resolution, that I may consider whether any notice, or what notice should be taken of it. Those enemies are serving me. They are persecuting me on a subject in which my conduct is perfectly clear. Love to all.

Yours, H. G.

I don't feel in the least on this business, except a pride in being *arraigned by a set of boobies*—all well.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

Oct. 27th, 1798.

My dear M'Can;—I got your draft—I enclose you a paragraph which I wish you to give to Bermingham to give to my friends, such as he pleases.

What do my friends mean by saying I should take notice of Hughes's testimony—in what manner? It seems to me too contemptible; however, tell me in what way.

I don't feel the run against me, because I know it is founded on folly. I just got your letter of the 18th.

Yours, H. Grattan.

All my letters are opened.

I shall delay going to the Continent until the run against me is over.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. FOX.

Twickenham, October 20, 1798.

Dear Sir,—The game arrived safe, and was extremely good, and I should have written to thank you, but was not certain of your address. I thank you for your offer to send me more, should the same success attend your arms. We shall continue at Twickenham for three weeks. I think I should have some reason to complain of the Court if it had associated me with itself and dissociated me from you.

To have resembled you at that moment of your destiny, in which you so deservedly obtained the just testimony of public love and return for public service, would not have been enough. It was necessary to have also the countersanction and verification of Court displeasure.* Personally, I must say, the Castle has been partial to me—it has not taken away my character by its company, nor my life by its informers.—I am, dear Sir, yours, most truly,

Henry Grattan.

* Mr. Fox's name was also struck from the list of privy councillors.

Importuned by his friends, Mr. Grattan, after much solicitation on their part, thought fit to consult with Mr. (afterwards Lord) Erskine, on the subject of the charges alleged against him in the Report of the House of Lords, and he accordingly sent it, with the following remarks, to Mr. Erskine:—

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. ERSKINE.

Twickenham, Nov. 1, 1798.

DEAR SIR,—I have marked the passages that relate to me; they are in pages 28, 29, 43, 44. I enclose an answer, which I can verify on oath; and wish to know from you, first, whether the evidence against me be material;—secondly, whether the answer be sufficient, and proper.

I enclose also a resolution of the Dublin Guild of Merchants, which makes an additional reason why I should notice the charge. If I could have your opinion by Saturday, I should be very thankful; and shall call at your house in London, or in the country, if that time be not too soon.—I am, with the greatest respect, yours, very sincerely, H. GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN'S REMARKS ON THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM.

The charge, as stated in the Report, is physically impossible. At the time in which the meetings are laid, I had left Ireland, or the persons composing those meetings were in prison.

This physical impossibility appears on the face of the Report, therefore *the Ministry, when they acted on this charge, were apprised of the physical impossibility of its truth.* I despise to avail myself, however, of the *alibi;* the person named in the Report did visit me long before the time stated in the Report. The three persons, Bond, Neilson, and Sweetman, in the spring of 1798, rode to the country to breakfast with me, once and once only, without invitation or appointment, and at that visit of personal acquaintance, which is most improperly called an *interview*, made no proposal to me, held no conversation with me, and never discoursed on their own subject. A considerable time after, Mr. Neilson, with a man named Hughes, whom I did not know, without appointment called on me to breakfast, which visit has been very improperly called an

interview, when he held no consultation with me whatsoever, but only entered upon a general conversation; with what specific view or application, I cannot affirm; but I can say, it was not attended with any effect; and further, that he shewed me the United Irishmen's published and printed Constitution, and explained it, but did not shew me or explain their plans. I must observe, that said Constitution was only the organization of their committees, such as appeared in the published report of the House of Commons a year and a half ago.

I am sure Mr. Sweetman knows what I have said above to be the case, as far as relates to him; and that Mr. Neilson, on recollecting, must be sensible of it. *As far as Mr. Hughes' testimony relates to me, save only as above, 'tis without foundation—it is not true that Mr. Neilson ever swore me*—it is not true that I ever went to see him in Newgate—and it is impossible Mr. Neilson ever said it.

MR. ERSKINE TO MR. GRATTAN.

DEAR SIR,—The words contained in the Report are, that the witness shewed or explained to you the *last* Constitution of the United Irishmen, and pressed you to come forward. What that *last* Constitution is, I know not; but if it is now known, or can be proved to have been nothing more than an association organized in the manner described by your memorandum, and published in all the newspapers, it certainly could not be misprision of treason, which consists in the concealment of treason, and not of any inferior crime, however dangerous to its tranquillity.

I think that the propriety of ANY *notice* from you of the many indignities pointed at you, depends upon your own feelings, subjecting them, at the same time, to the regulation of those of your friends who are connected with Ireland, and who are the best acquainted with its affairs.

An answer from Mr. Grattan, at the same time, *if it proceeds from himself*, and not merely as a paragraph, supposed to be the result of the opinion of his friends on the subject, should be somewhat more enlarged and comprehensive than the enclosed memorandum, because the public do not carry in their minds the facts which it refers to, and because it should contain the principles on which Mr. Grattan has always publicly acted and professed to act.

The maxim of Government no doubt is, that no tyranny, —no perversion of the trusts of Government,—no extinc-

tion, however degrading and insulting, of every security and privilege which form the consideration of the subject's obedience, can justify even *morally*, independently of legal obligation, any resort to combination, or resistance; but above all, to the one or the other as connected with foreign force, though a nation should be too weak within itself to shake off the yoke of power,—though it may have emancipated itself from the conditions annexed to its existence.

The application of this principle, as it has applied or may apply hereafter to Ireland, it is not my province or purpose to discuss; but the difficulty of setting about a public refutation of the charge of being a United Irishman, *even in their sense of the word*, is, that it must advance one of two propositions—either that in your opinion no circumstances can justify such a combination, which perhaps you are not prepared to assert; or else that the actual circumstances under which that combination took place did so little justify it, that it is an impeachment of moral character to be supposed to have acceded to it.

I say these are the *only* propositions, because, taking it to be only an aspersion which endangers the person by imputing a crime that may be prosecuted, I think it is too contemptible to deserve notice.

The Rebellion is now conquered, and therefore your disavowal will not be useful for the maintenance of authority, which is already established; it will not (however convincing and satisfactory) make peace with Government, and restore you to its confidence, neither would you accept of its confidence, supposing it could produce that effect; and nothing therefore would remain to it but the declaration to the mortified, discomfited, subdued Irish, (many of whom believed, at least, that they acted upon principle, though they were traitors against the law,) that you condemn and abjure them, and that, with all your objections to Government, you are ready to meet them in the field.

If this be a moral duty in a subject of Ireland at this moment, as tending to restore peace and good order, and Government, security to personal liberty, and protection to property, I would, in your place, make the declaration at all hazards; but if I thought it was more likely to create exasperation than to restore harmony, I would have you exercise the right of silence where the avowal of your sentiments could be of no service to your country, and prepare

yourself to act whenever you observed a fit occasion for exertion, as your duty to God, to your country, and to the world, unite in exacting from a man of your great talents and influence.

I only throw out these hints for your own reflection, and for consultation with your friends connected with Ireland, who are alone capable of advising you with propriety and safety.—Yours, sincerely, THOMAS ERSKINE.

Notwithstanding the opinion of Mr. Erskine, absolute silence did not appear to Mr. Grattan to be the course which he ought to pursue on the occasion. He accordingly published some remarks on the conduct which had been pursued towards him; and addressed his letter to an English newspaper, as in Ireland the press would have feared to insert it.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER.

SIR,—I resort to your power to communicate a letter to certain descriptions of persons in Ireland, who have been extremely busy in their attacks on me, and who deserve not absolute silence, nor yet much notice.

I choose to begin with that rank which I respect most—the Merchants; and were those persons using the name of that corporation the mercantile body of Dublin, I should be sorry indeed; not because I allow that the whole body, much as I respect them, could, by a scandalous proceeding bear down my character, but because I should be afflicted that by such a proceeding they had forfeited their own. I feel myself so linked and connected with every thing which belongs to the great body of the people of Ireland, that a comprehensive description of them could not, by any injustice, disgrace itself, without involving their natural friend and advocate in their degradation. Happy am I, however, that the persons in question are no more the merchants of Dublin than they are the people of Ireland; on the contrary, that they are an inconsiderable gathering, actuated by what folly or faction I care not, who have, in the charge against me, uttered not only what cannot be true, but what is recorded to be false: they have said, that they have legal evidence that I was concerned in the late rebellion, and the only matter they could have had before them was the Report of the Committee of the

Irish Lords, which is no legal evidence of any charge whatever against me; and which, if it were, is not evidence of that crime—so that those men, calling themselves the Guild of Merchants of Dublin, have asserted, published, and sealed, a self-convicted falsehood. I lament to be forced to use such words—and yet they are the mildest words such a conduct deserves, and must be understood by them, and applied to them in a sense the most unmeasured, and the most unqualified.

To the Corporation of Dublin I wish to say a word: They are not the citizens of Dublin—they are not even a considerable part of them, and they never spoke their spirit nor their sentiments; but as they have the honour of appertaining to the city, they are entitled to a degree of attention; and the best method of shewing it, is by advising them to be less fond of displaying themselves on every occasion. There are cases where their exertions are proofs of their folly, and where their repose would be an argument of their wisdom. All ministers, all men in power, all clerks, and the whole mob and rabble of the court, have been so sweltered with their charms, that it now requires a more than popular appetite to encounter their embraces; but very little share of philosophy to endure their displeasure. They ever wait on the wink of power to praise or persecute, and to blemish a reputation by unjust calumny, or unmeaning panegyric. With respect to them—with respect to the other corporations—with respect to all persons adopting similar proceedings, I am inclined to attribute much less to malice, and much more to folly—a good deal to influence—a good deal to servility, and to that low, impotent, persecuting spirit, by which the slavish mind shows its devotion at the expence of its understanding.

I ought not to be angry with these men, because I am one of the few of his Majesty's subjects, whom their charges, even if they were echoed as they are reprobated by my country, could not affect, and who might receive a thousand such shafts on the shield of character,—not with indignation, not with contempt, but with calm and pointed forgiveness—the result of a proud superiority, founded on my services and their injustice. To be angry with such men were to be degraded. On the subject of the charge I will make no explanation to them. I have said thus much to them, and they deserve much more; but I am not in

the habit of reproaching any portion of my fellow-citizens: if their mortification were the wish of my heart, I would refer them to the invectives of some of his Majesty's ministers.

Were it not robbing heaven of their time, I would say a few words to the Doctors. They had judged—they had condemned; but they forgot to try—they forgot to inquire. Pindaric poetry I admire; yet, I desire not to be tried by Pindaric justice. But divine men have privileges over the moral order of things, and in the holy way may spurn the vulgar bonds of equity, and pedant rules of evidence; perhaps the fabled buckler of divinity is not always court proof—up and down, exalted and detested—his picture high, his person just not hanged; mildness and Fitzwilliam; coercion and torture. Do I mention these things to condemn the learned Doctors?—no. But may I congratulate the memory of mad Athens, and tempestuous Rome, who find a pious shade cast over their insanities, by an example of more than republican inconstancy, in the instance of grave, orderly, regular, solid, and most excellent clergymen. I assure them I am not their enemy, though they may be mine. But that is not the case with another description of men, with whom I should be ashamed to discourse in the same tone of temper and moderation—I mean that *Irish faction, which is the secret mover of all this calumny and all this injustice—they stand at the head of a bloody combination. I look on them as the cause of every evil that has of late fallen on their country. I protest I do not know a faction which, considering the very small measure of their credit and ability, has done so much mischief to their king and country.* They opposed the restoration of the Constitution of Ireland; they afterwards endeavoured to betray and undermine it; they introduced a system of corruption unknown in the annals of parliament: they then proclaimed that corruption so loudly, so scandalously, and so broadly, that one of them was obliged to deny in one house, the notorious expressions he had used in another. They accompanied these offences by an abominable petulance of invective uttered from time to time against the great body of the people of Ireland, and *having by such proceedings, and such a discourse, lost their affection, they resorted to a system of coercion to support a system of torture attendant on a conspiracy of which their crimes was the cause.* And now their country displays a

most extraordinary contest—where an Englishman, at the head of its government, struggles to spare the Irish people, and an Irish faction presses to shed their blood! *I repeat it,—I do not know a faction more dangerous, more malignant, or more sanguinary.**

I am ready to enter into a detail of all this: enough at present to say, that I have been forced to write thus much, because I have no opportunity of vindication but the press, *and no press but that of England.*

I shall conclude by assuring that faction, that I am apprized of their enmity, and shall wait to meet their hostility; hoping, however, that they may not be my judges, or their blood-hounds my jury. At all events, if such a faction be permitted to dominate in Ireland, I had rather suffer by its injustice, than live under its oppression.

HENRY GRATTAN.

Twickenham, Nov. 9, 1798.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. MR. BERWICK.

November 10, 1798.

MY DEAR DOCTOR;—I sent you a letter in the *Courier.* I think the Merchants' resolutions ought to be despised; I have just noticed it to despise it. Hardy gives it too much consequence. A lawsuit would determine nothing except that they told a lie, which the evidence decides without the suit.

Tell my Lord Pery I love him; assure him, moreover, that the evidence, as stated in the Report of the *Lords' Committee, is not only not founded in fact, but, in every fact which is essential, unfounded.*

I will trouble you with the real case hereafter; but they have abused me too much to suffer me to stoop to excul-

* The violence of party, and the fell spirit of Orangeism which was so artfully fostered under Mr. Pitt's Government in Ireland, may be judged of from the following occurrence.—One of the insurgent party had returned from transportation a little before the period allowed by law had elapsed. He was brought to the house of a nobleman—a captain of yeomanry, and was desired to disclose the names of his former associates; this he refused to do. There was a jovial party in the house at the time, and the nobleman took out his watch, and gave the man half an hour to make up his mind. He was again asked to disclose his associates; he again refused; upon which he was instantly shot on the steps of the hall door! The wife of this nobleman went on her knees to beg his life; but her husband was inexorable. Yet, only a few hours later, and no man would have dared to touch a hair of his head!

pation. Take notice, that Neilson, at the time he is stated to have *called on me accidentally*, (*for it was not* an appointment or interview,) was closeted by Mr. Pelham on the question of restoring the North to tranquillity, by reforming the Parliament; *that Bond and Hughes never called upon me the whole of the year* 98 *but once*, and then made no proposition whatsoever, their visit being that of acquaintanceship merely, without any confidential communication whatsoever. Hughes is almost entirely false, and where not false, perverted. I might go into particulars; but, I must repeat it, I should be sorry anything like a justification of me should appear, because *I had rather be thought guilty of the charge, than of the condescension to explain to a set of men whose conduct I think criminal, and whose opinion contemptible.*

My love to all. I send you my letter, lest the printer should have omitted it.—Yours, H. G.

Thank Hardy. Tell my Lord Pery once more, I love him; he is almost the only man from whom I never differed in opinion without trembling.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE REV. MR. BERWICK.

Nov. 15th, 1798.

My dear Doctor;—Name the French Sermons, and I will send them. I differ from our most excellent corpulent friend;* it were to give too much importance to the charge, and to them who make it, to proceed by law. I deny that such men are competent to arraign. I go farther, I deny that our juries are competent to convict or acquit me. I don't concur with our most excellent lean friend† on the attendance on Parliament. The state of the press is a reason against departing from the principle of secession on the subject of Union. *That question will never come before the Parliament of Ireland until it be carried; and if ever there was a mock debate in the Irish Senate, it will be on the subject of the Union—no press to publish—a garrison without—and a court majority within.*

Tell the young doctor‡ I thank him for his letter, which I received this day.

They talk much of the renewal of the combination against France—there are some who doubt it. We got a

* Francis Hardy. † Joseph Preston (the poet).

‡ Reverend Richard Bermingham, who had written to him respecting the communication from Mrs. Neilson.

kind letter from Tom;* but Tom gives too much importance to the opinion of a successful faction. He may rely on it the opinion don't signify one farthing. I ought to lose it in order to deserve yours, and that of valuable men. Were that opinion formed on the evidence before the Lords, that could be satisfactorily refuted; but *I will explain nothing to criminals who would not acquit me, because I am innocent of the particular charge, but would convict me because I am innocent of other charges, of which they are guilty. Recollect, Doctor, that if those slaves make an uncommon rattling, it is because they are in chains.* I had for a moment thought of going to Ireland for a week, or so; but to go out of my way in any degree,—to move an inch to the north, where I intended to stay, an inch to the south, would be to feel such attacks. I do so far attend to them, that I remain within the reach of danger; but to make a move to seek the opinion of a set of poor slaves, would be a compliment to folly in a state of servitude, which it did not deserve in a state of liberty. Yours, &c. HENRY GRATTAN.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

London, 18*th Nov.* 1798.

MY DEAR M'CAN;—I got your letter: had they not abused me so unjustly on account of Hughes's evidence, I might, perhaps, have sent a statement *in which it would appear what they make treason, was an innocent breakfast.* But this is not the moment—they have used me too ill—I will set them at defiance;—besides, I will not stoop to flatter power, by abjuring a discomfited party studiously, or pusillanimously. It is unnecessary to go over to Ireland, because I am within the jurisdiction of his Majesty here. I am within the reach of every thing here, and shall postpone my visit to the Continent to remain here, and encounter any thing, of any sort, that may be intended.

I wish you would give a woman of the name of Ann Malone thirty shillings. She was a pensioner of our family, and has a poor mother near Tinnehinch. Direct to No. 30, Duke-street, Manchester Square. God bless you.

Yours, H. GRATTAN.

* Colonel Fitzgerald, his brother-in-law. He was serving at that time with his regiment in the South of Ireland.

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. BERWICK.

Nov. 30*th*, 1798.

DEAR DOCTOR,—I write this in the dark, and if you can read it 'tis more than I can.

I have the French Sermons in my eye, but remind me of them by letter. I enclose a note in the *Courier;* show it, for they probably won't print it.

Love to Ann*—to all.

The news to-day is, that the Emperor has made peace with France, and it is believed by wise people. I have received several affectionate letters from Ireland; so that the fools that abuse me, only prove the friends that love me. There will be no Union.

Where are Foster and Beresford? What's doing I can't hear. They say Foster has resisted a Union, the Times says otherwise.

I have not seen Lord Moira; he was out when I called, but I shall see him before he leaves London.

Lady Charlotte Rawdon† wrote to Mrs. Grattan—she is to be with her to-morrow. I have been confined with a cold, or should have gone there yesterday or to-day. The weather has been very severe—coals very dear—if coals had been as dear in Dublin, when I was representative, as they now are in London, I should have been hanged. I have tired you—you write so like Richard Bermingham, and Richard Bermingham writes so like you, that I know the letters of both, by not being able to read either.

Yours, H. G.

Ever remember me to Lord Pery. I cannot get another newspaper, and, therefore, I wish you to circulate the enclosed. You can get, and give copies of it, as I suppose they will not publish it in Ireland.

MR. GRATTAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER.

SIR,—I was forced to charge certain persons, calling themselves the Dublin Guild of Merchants, with gross and recorded falsehood. How sorry am I to be obliged to extend the same unqualified indignity to certain other persons, calling themselves the Corporation of Derry! In the pain which I feel to write in this manner to any description of Irishmen, nothing consoles me, except a thorough conviction, that they have departed from the

* His wife. † Lord Moira's sister.

generous qualities of their countrymen, and have forfeited the character of truth and honour.

To have enemies, is the general lot of public life; not to have deserved them among the people of Ireland, is the singularity of mine. HENRY GRATTAN.

Duke-street, Manchester-square.

Indignant at the gross perversion of his evidence in the Report of the Lords' Committee, Neilson was not satisfied with the private statement made to Mr. Grattan, but he sent a letter to the English press, publicly denying its accuracy.

SAMUEL NEILSON TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

New Prison, December, 1798.

SIR;—It appears to be the occupation of a certain party to calumniate the State prisoners. So far as these calumnies regard myself, I smile at them for the moment. *Time rolls on, and truth will one day be heard.* In the meantime, I am, however, particularly called on by some recent publications, in vindication of a truly respectable character, whose conduct and principles have been basely vilified, to state thus publicly, that not one word can fall from me which could, in the most remote degree, tend to support the accusation made against him,* as the committee of the Lords and Commons well know; and I cannot but say, that the coupling my name with that of a common informer,† whose testimony was in direct opposition to mine, even as given in a celebrated Report, is but a clumsy pretext for the traduction of virtue.

SAMUEL NEILSON.

The conspiracy of the Government spy had failed, and the perjury of the party would have been more publicly exposed, and properly punished, if the press in Ireland had not been almost extinct, if any liberty had been allowed to exist, and if pains had been taken on the subject by Mr. Grattan; but his letters show that he was not inclined to proceed in the matter, for what

* Mr. Grattan. † Hughes.

chance would he have had of obtaining justice?—or what hopes from a jury in Ireland? He therefore patiently awaited the development of any further malignity on the part of his enemies, and set them at defiance. A discovery, however, was now on the eve of being made, which would have greatly embarrassed them; perhaps have covered them with shame, and have fully exposed their iniquitous proceedings. The informer Bird, of whom mention has been made already, and who had renounced their friendship and escaped from their protection, had about this period been apprehended in the county of Louth, and happened to be imprisoned in the same place as William Dowdall, and to him he made a communication of great importance, (as he represented it,) to Mr. Grattan's personal safety. Dowdall told this to Mr. Curran, who, being often applied to professionally by the state prisoners, was fixed upon to receive Bird's statement. Unfortunately, some accident or misadventure prevented him from procuring it at the time, and I well recollect, when Mr. Grattan afterwards was alluding to that period, he said that Curran had been guilty of a very great omission in "not obtaining the information in a matter which might have proved so very material to his character or perhaps to his life." Whether it may have occurred through neglect or not, the critical opportunity was suffered to pass, and Dowdall's note to Bird being found by the Government retainers, the latter was instantly hurried away. The clue to the business was lost, all further discovery in the attempts against Mr. Grattan was at an end; and the danger being over, he did not seek to act upon the communication. It was said by some, that Government had connected themselves in the proceedings of Hughes, and that they had planned them. It was by others

said that Lord Clare had applied to Stockdale (the printer imprisoned by order of the House of Lords), and that considerable and singular offers were made to him. There is no doubt but that he was visited by Lord Clare and interrogated by him respecting Mr. Grattan; but Stockdale could say nothing; the mystery, however, that hung over these occurrences was never removed; and doubtless, whatever was their precise object, no good was intended towards Mr. Grattan. The letters are of a singular character.

MR. WILLIAM DOWDALL TO MR. GRATTAN.

New Prison, Tuesday Morning, Dec. 1798.

Sir;—Permit me to return you my sincere thanks for the twenty guineas handed to me by Mrs. Risk. Though left without a shilling at present, (the poor creatures from whom I received some little rent, being driven to ruin and banishment by the insurrection,) I feel the utmost pain in accepting from you, on whom I can have no claim to such a present, and beg you will not be offended at my indulging a hope I may yet in some manner repay it.

I received the enclosed letter to forward to you, before I suffered you to commit yourself with the writer. I wrote to him by the advice of Mr. Curran (a copy of which I also enclose). This letter of mine, I am informed, was found in his room, *and occasioned his being instantly sent to England in irons to prevent any further communication. I really think this man is in possession of some circumstances very material to you, either in attempts by himself or some other of the band, to injure you;* but your own judgment will best determine how you should act.

I have declined signing the conditions of the Government for emigration, but if they would allow me to depart without examination, or other security than that of leaving the country, I should prefer it to an arbitrary imprisonment; indeed, I am inclined to think, if I memorialized Lord Cornwallis, I might be admitted to bail, as M'Gucken (who was included in the list of emigrants at his own solicitation), but I know not well through what channel to have it handed to himself, and never could consent that anything

from me like a request of favour should appear before Cooke.*

I hope Mrs. Grattan and you have enjoyed perfect health. Believe me, sir, that you may continue to do so, and finally overcome your enemies, is the sincerest wish of

Your ever devoted humble servant,
WM. DOWDALL.

MR. DOWDALL TO J. W. BIRD.

SIR,—I have transmitted the *letter* to the person you wish, together with my opinion of the sentiments of the writer. My own knowledge, but more particularly that of *some here*, so much better acquainted with him, leaves not a doubt of his honour and disinterestedness.

He has, to a certainty, by this received the *letter;* in the delicate situation all parties are placed, you will not expect his acknowledgment at present. I believe it is hardly necessary to tell you, that my sincere respect for that gentleman is such, as to authorise me to act as my judgment may dictate, in anything that concerns his honour or interest. I have therefore no doubt (convinced as I am of the purity of your motives) that you will, through me, communicate anything for his information. For my conduct in this business you have every security, from my private esteem for the person in question,—from honour and gratitude.—I am, Sir, &c. &c. WM. DOWDALL.

J. BIRD TO MR. GRATTAN.

State Prison, Dublin Castle, Dec. 1, 1798.

SIR,—The ephemeral triumph of corruption and vice, by no means make me repent having quitted its blood-stained banners; and amid the evils of a rigid confinement, the consciousness of having torn some intended victims from its merciless fangs, affords me a consolation in my solitary dungeon superior to any I have ever before experienced.

By a strange concatenation of circumstances, some very important secrets have been thrown into my power, a part of which is, I believe, ere this developed by me in a letter I addressed to the Marquis of Cornwallis, and signed "Humanitas;" but a still more important one, and inexpressibly gratifying to my feelings, *has placed one of your venal persecutors (and the most celebrated one too) completely within my grasp*, and I have already secured such corroboration, as shall strike conviction into the breasts of

* The under-secretary.

those sanguinary and bigotted wretches, *who wish by any means to effect your destruction, though they dare not avow it.*

Till I know that this letter is received safe, I shall not be more explicit; nor can I publicly avow it, till I am liberated, (of which I have not the smallest prospect,) except a prosecution by the State follows a prosecution by hirelings and assassins, in which no consideration whatever shall hinder my coming forward, if, Sir, when you are possessed of particulars, *you should deem such an act requisite to insure your safety.*

You had once, Sir, an opportunity of witnessing, that when the proof of enormities, committed by the governors against the governed, was about to be investigated, I did not shrink from my part, but offered to appear and be examined at the bar of the House of Peers.* This, Sir, I trust, will secure me credit when I assert, that in this communication I have no other than direct views, which centre in one point, *a most ardent desire of securing your life from murderers, and your character from perjured calumniators.*—I have the honour to be, with the most profound respect, Sir, your most humble and obedient servant, J. BIRD.

N.B.—Mr. * * * is the medium through which I transmit this letter, and anything that may hereafter occur in this business can be done through the same channel; but no person can call on me with safety, as Major Sirr takes up every one whom he knows of coming to see me.

In these times of trouble and of danger, when the reign of terror prevailed, when private friendship vanished before the threats of power and the virulence of faction, and when all the bad passions of the human heart had unfortunately been set in motion, it is satisfactory to be able to record the kindness of individuals, whose sincerity and constancy remained unshaken.† One of the most

* When he communicated with Lord Moira on his motion in the Irish Parliament.

† It must also be here mentioned that the regard and the friendship that had subsisted between the Prince of Wales and Mr. Grattan, underwent at this period no change whatever. He discredited all the rumours regarding him, and though not always steady to his friends, he continued so to the last in the case of Mr. Grattan.

remarkable instances, was that of Mr. Fox. Indignant at the manner in which Mr. Grattan was treated, he took a ready opportunity to evince his attachment, not only to his principles, but to his person; and when the Whig Club of England assembled in the month of December, (Lord Holland in the chair,) after alluding to the politics of the day, and passing a panegyric on Mr. Grattan, he thus expressed himself—

"Gentlemen who are not very young will recollect that Mr. Grattan was, during the American war, at the head of the Opposition in Ireland; acting on the same principles as the Opposition with which I am connected here; and, in the change which took place in consequence of that successful opposition, he bore a considerable part, and his efforts are not forgotten. He received a grant from the Parliament of his country—a mark of their attention and kindness. I have also received from my country, though not in the same way, but in a way equally peculiar and unprecedented—a mark of kindness and attention equally flattering.* To add to that similarity, we also are the two persons, who, having received the most substantial marks of public approbation, have *also received from the Ministers the least substantial marks of ministerial displeasure*—from the Public we have received ease and affluence—*by the Minister we have had our names erased from the Privy Council.*

Gentlemen remarking this similarity in political character, may think that it is from motives of partiality that I give Mr. Grattan as a toast; but I assure you he has higher claims than from mere personal attachment. *His life has been uniformly spent in maintaining the just principles of the Constitution, and in promoting the happiness of his native land; and without sacrificing his independence* amidst the corruptions of the times, he has kept clear of anything prejudicial to his country. He has never been concerned in disturbing its tranquillity, and has never lent the sanction of his name to acts of violence and oppression."

Mr. Fox then proposed, "Henry Grattan, and the friends of liberty and moderation in Ireland."

* A large subscription was made by the Whig party, and upwards of 30,000*l.* presented to him. Of which 25,000*l.* was to buy an annuity, and the rest to pay his debts.

In consequence of this compliment, Mr. Grattan wrote to Mr. Fox as follows:

Dec. 6, 1798.

My dear Sir;—I am again to thank you. Nothing could be more honourable to me, or more seasonable,—I could not have wished it done in a better manner; it was very material to me that such a declaration should be made at this time.

I had some thoughts of going to the Club, but was in doubt, should I have gone, what to say, and therefore followed the rule of policy, when I was uncertain what was proper to do—to do nothing. It gives some pleasure to be able to assure you that you were right in the opinion that you have formed of my moderation,—as will appear from the paper* I enclose to you, which is an observation on the evidence that appeared against me, which I did not publish—for this reason,—lest it should appear abjuring a discomfited party in Ireland, *who have been driven into the measures they adopted by the real criminals of the country —the Ministers.* At the same time I wish to show it to you, and to particular friends, who will there see the precipitation of Government. I am very sorry to hear to-day from O'Brien, that Mrs. Armstead had been indisposed, to whom I beg my best regards, in which I am joined by a young gentleman, who has begun Cæsar's Commentaries to-day with great spirit. I am yours truly,

Henry Grattan.

Mr. Grattan's health by this time had become considerably impaired. Public affliction and private annoyance had preyed severely on a mind highly sensitive, and on feelings over-ardent and patriotic. He saw his fondest hopes baffled and disappointed—his country no longer the scene of freedom or repose; and the danger that he had long ago apprehended, and often foretold, now appeared certain, not only to threaten, but likely to *precipitate upon her.* His forebodings as to the Union were about to be realised, and the Constitution that he had assisted to procure, was now threatened to be taken away. Mr. Pitt was

* Sent to Mr. Erskine.

fully prepared to enforce his views upon the subject. He seemed resolved to carry the measure of Union at any hazard, if he could only get it supported by Parliament,—though it might be opposed by the people. He knew the country was subdued, and its spirit conquered: in truth, before the measure of Union was proposed, Parliament had sealed its own doom; for when it handed over the people to be flogged by the soldiery, it decided its fate. Parliament had lost its greatest support out of doors; it had abandoned the people, and when a question about its existence arose, the people abandoned the Parliament — they certainly were in heart against the measure; but they feared to stir. They would, if they could, have taken up arms in order to preserve a pure constitution, though not to fight for such a House of Commons; but the Government had so managed that they rendered the thing impossible; they had disarmed them—defeated them: stopped their meetings—prevented them from declaring openly against the Union, and now weighed them down by a military force of upwards of 100,000 men: these were the fruits of the proceedings of 1798 —a result which should teach men to be very cautious how they support any government in strong measures. When the insurgents were put down, the country was put down; for a government is certain always to convert its victory over a party, into a conquest over the people. The *real object* of the Minister was to render matters easier for himself, and get rid of the trouble of two Parliaments. His *professed* object was to consolidate the people; but his plan proposed no such thing, for it kept the Irish divided by law, which was certain to keep them disunited in sentiment. Mr. Pitt did not seek to gain the strength of the country, for he left the Catholics upon half-

privileges; and the heavy charge against him was that his proposed plan, like his former government in Ireland, went to continue, as it had originated, a hostile impression towards England, and one that could only pass away with the generation. In proof of this, when Mr. Cooke, the under-secretary, had written a pamphlet in favour of the measure, and held out to the Roman Catholics the promise of emancipation as a lure to induce them to support the Union, Lord Castlereagh interposed, and stopped the publication of the work: only half of it was printed—the copies were suppressed, and the impression destroyed.*

Mr. Grattan, hearing "*the dreadful note of preparation*," returned to Ireland; but his health proved unequal to sustain him in the conflict; he was powerless, and incapable of attending to public affairs.

The British Parliament had assembled earlier than the Irish, and on the 4th of January, 1799, the King had sent to it a message recommending the Union, and hoping that "the Parliament of both kingdoms will proceed in the measures which they may judge most expedient for effecting such a complete and *final* adjustment as may best lead to confirm and perpetuate the connexion essential to their common security, and to augment and consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the empire." This was opposed by Mr. Sheridan, who, after alluding to the final and solemn settlement made between the two countries in 1782, moved an amendment in opposition to the principle, and praying his Majesty would not listen to the counsels of those who advised it. This was

* Mr. Knox, who had been private secretary to Lord Castlereagh, and was friendly to the Catholics, saw the work, and used to relate the anecdote. The report, however, having got into circulation, excited great sensation, and the pamphlet was eagerly sought for, but in vain,—Lord Castlereagh had destroyed it.

rejected without a division. It was on this occasion that Mr. Canning highly praised the pamphlet of Dr. Duigenan, which he said had effectually demolished his opponent. It is probable that before his death he changed his mind on this subject, as he lived long enough to see and hear both of these individuals in the Imperial Parliament. On the 31st of January, Mr. Pitt, although he had heard of the rejection of the measure by the Irish Parliament, brought forward nine resolutions in favour of the Union. On this, Mr. Sheridan moved two resolutions declaring that the full assent of the Parliaments of both countries was indispensably necessary, and whoever attempted to obtain it by intimidation or corruption,* was an enemy to his Majesty and the constitution.

This measure of paramount importance, and the spirited and successful efforts made in 1799 to defeat it, will be more fully particularized in a subsequent chapter. It is here briefly referred to, that Mr. Fox's letter and opinion on the subject

* This was a necessary resolution to adopt, as may appear from the following anecdote regarding one of Mr. Grattan's relations. Sir John Blackwood and his son Stevenson,—of whom mention has been already made,—sat in Parliament for the borough of Killyleagh, and when Lord Castlereagh was recruiting for votes in support of the Union, he called upon them in the county of Down. Sir John was an independent man, and was hostile to the measure. In times past there had been in some branch of the family a title of "*Dufferin and Claneboy*,"—so Lord Castlereagh taking up the old baronet's snuff-box which lay on the chimney-piece, and which bore the family arms, observed, "*How well a coronet would become this box! and if you like it, you can easily have it by voting for the Union!* Sir John Blackwood immediately rang the bell, and when the servant came in he desired him *to show that gentleman down stairs!* The servant did so, and without saying another word, *he turned Lord Castlereagh out of his house.—Oh si sic omnes!* This spirited old baronet, though very ill, set off in January, 1799, to vote against the Union, but he was unable to reach Dublin, and died shortly afterwards.

Lord Castlereagh, as I have also heard, was afterwards turned out of another person's house in the North of Ireland, for conduct of a similar nature. Sheridan was right in proposing his resolution, and Mr. (now Lord) Brougham, was under a mistake when he said in one of his speeches, that Lord Castlereagh "*had never put the question directly.*"

may be introduced, and Mr. Grattan's absence from Parliament during this period may be satisfactorily accounted for.

The speech from the throne was delivered by Lord Cornwallis on the 22nd of January, and contained the following paragraph :

"The unremitting industry with which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of endeavouring to effect a separation of this kingdom from Great Britain, must have engaged your particular attention; and His Majesty commands me to express his anxious hope, that this consideration, joined to the sentiments of mutual affection and common interest, may dispose the Parliaments in both kingdoms to provide the most effectual means of maintaining and improving a connexion essential to their common security, and of consolidating, as far as possible, into one firm, lasting fabric, the strength, the power, and the resources of the British empire."

The address of approval in reply was moved by Lord Tyrone, one of the Beresford family, and was seconded by Mr. Robert Fitzgerald of Cork. This was ably opposed on the debate that lasted twenty-two hours.

Mr. Ponsonby proposed to add to that part of the address in reply to the Viceroy's speech, recommending a Union, these words : "But maintaining the undoubted birthright of the people of Ireland to have a free and independent legislature resident within the kingdom, as it was asserted in the Parliament of this kingdom in 1782, and acknowledged and ratified by his Majesty and the Parliament of Great Britain upon the final adjustment of the discontents and jealousies then prevailing among his Majesty's loyal subjects of this country." The numbers on the division were—Ayes, 105—tellers, George Ponsonby and Sir Laurence Parsons; Noes, 106—tellers, Lord Tyrone and Maurice Fitzgerald (Knight of Kerry).

Thus the address was carried only by a majority of one.

On the 24th, on bringing up the address, Mr. Ponsonby got leave from the House, upon motion, to speak a second time to the question, in consequence, no doubt, of Lord Castlereagh's very pointed attack on him. His reply to his antagonist was powerful. The numbers on division were—against the tenth paragraph, (recommending a Union,) remaining part of the address,—Ayes, 104—tellers, Mr. Smith and M'Clelland (made judges after); Noes, 109—tellers, Sir L. Parsons and Denis Bowes Daly. Thus the Minister was defeated by a majority of five.

Mr. Grattan announced this intelligence to Mr. Fox in the following letter:

MR. GRATTAN TO MR. FOX.

Kildare-street, Dublin, 20th Jan. 1799.

My dear Sir;—I enclose the pamphlet written on the Irish Union; it is written with much spirit, by a very worthy man, who is a great admirer of yours, and who wishes to stand well in your opinion, that he may stand well in his own.*

You see by the papers the fate of that question. The Irish Ministry betrayed the worst designs, accompanied with distinguished inability. They threatened—they dismissed—and they bought notoriously and ineffectually, and could only muster 107 on the question of the Address, when they thought themselves most strong, and were finally beaten by a majority of five. In the loss of the question, they have lost their reputation for address; but in the attempt, they have lost the confidence of every party in Ireland. I hear, from no bad authority, they had reckoned on a majority of forty. I was happy at the Duke of Leinster's conduct—vexed at Conolly's—and ashamed for Yelverton's. I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Fox, and I hope, in a few weeks, to see you at Ann's Hill.

I am, with great sincerity, yours,

Henry Grattan.

* Mr. Goold, afterwards Sergeant, and now Master in Chancery in Ireland.

P.S. The Bishop of Down spoke to a Mr. Ball to contradict what he had asserted in an advertisement, in which he attempted to state your sentiments regarding the present measure of an Irish Union. He has, I believe, done it. Mr. Ball being asked on what ground he stated your sentiments, said he had no ground whatever, but he had heard that the Duke of Leinster was for a Union, and he thought you might be of the same opinion.

MR. FOX TO MR. GRATTAN.

St. Ann's Hill, Feb. 4th, 1799.

My dear Sir;—I received, the day before yesterday, your letter, with its enclosure, for which I return you many thanks. The pamphlet is full of spirit, and argument, and proves its author to be no common man.

I am heartily glad of the fate of the Union question in Ireland, as I think it was one of the most unequivocal attempts at establishing the principles, as well as the practice, of despotism, that has been made in our times. Even the French, in their cursed fraternizations, pretend at least that they act in consequence of the desire of the *people* of the several countries. If you have read the same account that I have of Pitt's speech on Thursday last, you will have seen that he is determined to keep the question alive as long as he is minister; and what security your anti-Unionists can have against it, it is difficult to conceive, while you have a Government who profess openly the intention of watching every opportunity of renewing the attack upon you.

It should be remembered that this is a case where no number of defeats is final; whereas, one victory decides irrecoverably in favour of your enemies. A change of Lord Lieutenant does nothing in this case; and it has occurred to me, that it is possible Pitt may wish to bring on that situation, which, I admit, is the most difficult one that can arise in the system of 1782; I mean that of one kingdom wishing to remove a minister which the other may choose to retain; for it will not do to say, that the King may govern Great Britain by one minister, and Ireland by another, since the British Minister must of necessity be the adviser in the nomination of a Lord Lieutenant. It may be refinement, but I think, from his manner of treating the Regency business, he seems to see the weakest part of the system, and would not be sorry to bring it in full view at a

time when he thinks himself (and, perhaps, is) strong at home. I see no other solution of his conduct, for, surely, he cannot think it will smooth things in Ireland to profess openly that he intends to take the first occasion of compassing what appears to be the most offensive to its Parliament and people.

Mrs. Armstead desires to be remembered to you, and will, as well as myself, be very happy to see you here when you return. I am glad the paragraph you allude to was contradicted—the truth is, I never was a friend to the Union, as a speculative question, nor should like it even if it were the general wish of Ireland, much less at such a time, and in such circumstances. I am sorry for Conolly, but after he made that speech last summer, I foresaw all the rest. Yours, ever sincerely, C. J. Fox.

The following letters, as they relate to this important subject, are inserted to show the feeling of the writers towards Ireland, and how eagerly the earliest advantage was taken of the insurrection to urge on the Union. Mr. Dundas, then Secretary, writes on the 29th of December, 1798, to the Earl of Mornington (Marquess Wellesley), at that time in India; and after commenting on the affairs of that empire, and the success of the British arms, he adds:

"* * * The most pressing subject now remaining, is the situation of Ireland—all the attempts of treason to invade it have been discomfited either by the surrender of the troops when landed, or by the capture of their fleet and troops by the navy, without permitting them to land. Notwithstanding all our exertions at home for our own security, and notwithstanding the appropriation of considerable force to our own distant possessions and the Mediterranean, we have been enabled to send *to the assistance of Ireland, within the year, not less than* 25,000 *troops, consisting partly of regular forces, but chiefly of fencibles and militia regiments, who have volunteered the service. It is now decided that the plan of Union is to be immediately brought forward, and the whole strength of Government applied to carry it through!!*"—Yours, &c.,

H. Dundas.

MARQUESS CORNWALLIS TO THE EARL OF MORNINGTON.

Dublin Castle, 18th March, 1799.

My dear Lord;—I little thought when we parted, that my first letter to you would have been dated from this place; but my evil stars have determined that I never should enjoy quiet or comfort, and after relieving me from what I then thought a painful task (a second embarkation for India), *have driven me into a situation ten times more arduous, and, in every respect, more intolerable.*

You have many friends that will send you Irish news; and as I can say nothing on the melancholy situation of this unhappy country that can afford you satisfaction,* *I shall not enter into a detail of our calamities.*

I am, my dear Lord, very truly yours,

Cornwallis.

MARQUESS CORNWALLIS TO EARL MORNINGTON.

Phœnix Park, 20th Sept. 1799.

I wish I could say that things in this island wore as prosperous an aspect as with you; but there still remains too much treason and disaffection on one side, and too much violence on the other. On the whole, however, we are better than we have been; and the idea of a Union proves more popular, and gains ground, both in and out of Parliament. Cornwallis.†

By some Mr. Grattan was censured for not having at once taken a part against the Union when it was proposed in 1799. Neither the will nor the spirit were deficient; but the scenes he had gone through had so increased his nervous complaint, that he found it impossible to attend to politics—quiet and absence from all exciting subjects were recommended by his physicians as the only cure. He was not allowed to read of, or to speak on political affairs. Newspapers and books were alike prohibited, and change of scene,

* His brother, Arthur Wellesley (Duke of Wellington), was then in India, and has left a memento of his opinion on the subject of the Union, given too in a very decided manner; for in writing about that period to a friend of his, and an uncle of mine — the Reverend William Elliot — after some remarks on the Irish Parliament, he adds,—"*There must be no more* Debating Societies *in Ireland.*"

† See Marquess Wellesley's Despatches, vol. i.

and time, was all he was encouraged to look forward to as a probable remedy.

The following letters will suffice to rescue him from the charge of too great sensitiveness, or the supposition that the injuries and insults he had received from a portion of his countrymen, would have induced him to abandon at so critical a period, their dearest interests.

MRS. GRATTAN TO MR. M'CAN.

London, March 5, 1799.

DEAR SIR,—I received your letter of yesterday. Mr. Grattan was much better; he went about the town with us, was not fatigued, eat heartily, slept well; this day he has had some returns of the meagrims, and unpleasant feelings in his head, and is not quite so well. Richard Bermingham is gone out with him in a coach, and perhaps the air may be of service; the Doctor says he has no particular complaint, and that time, with a total freedom from every distressing subject, will cure him. God grant it, though it is an unpleasant life to him. We never talk on the subject of politics,—we read by turns, and he lies on the sofa,—we are both sensible of your kindness and sincerity, *which is a rare virtue in these times;* I am sure he may say so. I know not what to say to your desire of his returning to Ireland; in his present situation I should think it bad for him; when he gets better, I will let him know your idea, and perhaps he will agree to it. Now, we must only think of removing his complaint, be it what it may. Doctor Turton assures me there is no danger, and he is my oracle; he orders no medicine—nothing but air and amusement. Mr. Grattan sends his affectionate love. I am, most truly, yours, H. GRATTAN.

SAME SO SAME.

London, Wednesday, April 10, 1799.

DEAR SIR,—I have still the good news to continue of Mr. Grattan's being better. Doctor Turton has added more bark to his former prescription, and orders him to continue the same course of exercise, &c. &c. &c. He is not yet able to amuse himself with reading or writing; but we supply the power he wants, and entertain him constantly.

Mr. Grattan is out riding with Mr. Bermingham, or would send his particular regards.—All, most truly, your sincere friends, HENRIETTA GRATTAN.

SAME TO SAME.

London, 25, Blandford-street, Manchester-square, May 11, 1799.

DEAR MR. M'CAN,—I would have written to you sooner, had anything particular occurred.

Mr. Grattan begs of you to go to Tinnehinch, and enquire from Savage whether M'Cue takes care of the place. This is the first conversation we have had on the subject of Tinnehinch, for I did not read to him or tell him of what Mrs. Bermingham mentioned about the soldiers cutting down the trees. It would have agitated him, and these two last days he has had a return of his disorder. I have had Doctor Turton, and intended calling in another physician, had he continued with the same symptoms. This day the uneasy feel in his head returned,—a dread of falling, and a pain in his head, when the horse trotted,—an inability to read, which he has not done for this fortnight past, until last Wednesday. This has not raised my spirits, for I hoped all was over, and I now find all is to begin again; but God's will be done! You may judge we shall not think of Ireland, when I dare not even talk of the depredations committed there. The weather must affect him; 'tis cold as March, and most unpleasant,—no sign of spring. I hope it agrees with all your family, and that you are in perfect health, which is the sincere wish of both Mr. Grattan, and your true friend,

HENRIETTA GRATTAN.

SAME TO SAME.

May 15th, 1799.

DEAR SIR;—I received your letter on Tuesday last—I sent it to Mr. Burrowes this morning—on Saturday Mr. Bermingham shall go for it and the money. I am grieved at the account of Tinnehinch, and wish you could have gone in the interval, from the 25th of March to the 8th of May, which time you say you were there. I hear great depredations have been committed, and the trees cut down by the soldiers.* I know not who to put into it, or what de-

* I never heard that Government punished *their* men, or sent them to Mr. Grattan to atone for their depredations, as Dwyer the

scription of person I could get, that would be called respectable. Give me an idea of any one that strikes you as proper, and I will try to get Mr. Grattan's consent; he is very indifferent this last week—had much of those affections, and the least thing agitates him.

I have not dared to mention the name of Tinnehinch, except one day when he desired me to write to you about it. He thinks the labourers too numerous; he does not like expense when he is not there. As to returning to Ireland, that is a jest—he does not like going even out of town, because of removing from the physicians. He walks much, and rides every day, but cannot bear noise, or crowd, or heat. I am sometimes fearful that this disorder will hang a long time on him. I read to him constantly, and he never writes. I am most truly yours, H. GRATTAN.

SAME TO SAME.

Cowes, Isle of Wight, June 29, 1799.

DEAR SIR,—We are much obliged to you for the account of Tinnehinch, and since we mean to visit it, without fail, in a few months, hope to find it as you describe, and the country tranquil. We arrived at the Isle of Wight without any fatigue; the place agrees wonderfully with Mr. Grattan, and has already been of service to him; he is in perpetual exercise, and for ever on the sea; bathing has done him good, and except his rest, which is not quite returned, he is astonishingly recovered; he does not attempt either to read or write, but his appetite is good, and so are his spirits. The island is very beautiful, and the little town very commodious for bathing and boating, with good accommodation of every sort; the village is mostly built up the side of the hill, and overhangs the sea beautifully, which is covered with boats and ships. It is a most healthful situation.

My girls and boys are well, and delight in this place; they desire to be remembered to you, and Mr. Grattan sends his best regards. I fear Mr. Browne has no chance of the Provostship; I wish it was in my gift, and he should not fail. I am, yours, &c. H. GRATTAN.

insurgent did when *his* men acted in a similar manner near Lord Wicklow's. In more instances than this could the Irish Government have profited by the maxim—"*Fas est ab hoste doceri!*"—See page 397.

SAME TO SAME.

Cowes, Sept. 8, 1799.

Sir,—I am sorry to say that we are not as well as when I last wrote. Mr. Grattan has had a return of his complaint; the sleepless nights make him very dejected in the day, and he intends going for a week to Twickenham, before our return to Ireland. The latter end of this month, we quit this island, and I am grieved it will not be with that advantage which I had hoped Mr. Grattan would have received; he looks well, but his appetite is not as good as usual, yet I make him take nourishing things; he has been obliged to give up reading, which is a great distress to him, it makes him so dependent on others for that amusement he always had in his own power. You were very kind in your intention about the horses; but he will have job-horses, and everything that will prevent trouble or thought to him; one safe horse of his own he must have, I have written to Mr. Bermingham to look out for one, and you also do the same; a safe trotting pony would be the best, I should think. Our weather is better this last week; I do not find it warmer than our own, but with less rain. Though the wind is easterly and strong, Mr. Grattan sits in a boat in the sea for hours, to get the air round him, and the exercise, which does not fatigue. If he continues at all well, we shall return in winter to Ireland; but his changes are so sudden, that it is impossible to fix on any plan a week before.

My children are all well, and Mr. Grattan joins me in best regards to you and wishes for you.—I am, yours, &c.,

Henrietta G.

Mr. Grattan's parliamentary career in Ireland was now fast approaching to its close. At the end of the year 1799 he returned to dedicate the remainder of his days to the service of his country. These, indeed, promised to be few. Distracted in mind — distempered in body — broken down in spirits, in health, and in hope—he came too feeble and too late to be of service. How fallen!—how changed!—no longer what he was when, with a Charlemont* at the head of forty thousand Volun-

* He died in 1799, and his death at this critical period greatly afflicted Mr. Grattan.

teers, he called forth the nation to arms and to liberty—

Hei mihi! qualis erat, quantum mutatus ab illo!

The spirit of better days had fled—like a dream it had passed away, and no signs appeared of its resurrection.

Other times, and other men had come—Clare, Pitt, the Beresfords,—these were the lords of the ascendant: and the old and steady assertors of their country's rights, stigmatised and reviled, were now cast unfeelingly into the shade. What, then, could be hoped for Ireland?—what could *she* expect?—Nay, what could have been expected or said even of England, if, after expelling James II., the English had chosen *his* advisers for *their* ministers, or if, after their Revolution, they had discarded Lord Somers, who had given them liberty?—the same fate as now befel Ireland.

Her staunchest supporter was not only disabled for the fight, but he came late into the field—

Inutile ferrum
Cingitur, ac densos fertur moriturus in hostes.

The enemy had been in occupation the entire of the year, and though defeated at the outset, remained unsubdued and unterrified. Mr. Pitt was obstinate in his labours; Lord Castlereagh was indefatigable. Mr. Pitt had treasured up in his mind the remembrance of his defeat on the Regency question, and came down upon Ireland with a hoarded resentment. He allowed the people to deceive themselves by the blind expectations which he dexterously held out. He gained some — neutralized others — took advantage of both, and, finally, broke faith with all. He sought to bribe the Roman Catholic clergy; he strove to cajole the Roman Catholic laity, and buy the representatives of the nation:—to the first he held

out the hopes of salary and pension; to the second, the *imperial phantom* of privilege; and to the third, gold, silver, and titles (*not honour!*) His caitiffs of corruption were everywhere: stooping to the basest arts of public and private prostitution, and destroying the morals as well as the independence of the community,—they could be observed creeping into every man's house with the wages of iniquity, and seeking to tempt the vanity of the wife when they had failed to reach the venality of the husband.

It seemed as if the failure of Mr. Pitt's continental policy was now to be atoned for by his new experiment upon Ireland, and that he sought to build his fame upon the wreck of her constitution. But his Irish Government will ever be an eternal disgrace to his name, and sully the hereditary honour he acquired from his great progenitor. This guilty minister — baffled abroad, and entailing ruin at home*—with the brand of bribery in his hand, and the lash of the Gaul† upon his back, stood forth, the shameless perpetrator of the basest deeds towards Ireland; and in every thing relating to that country, showed a fatal infirmity of thought and of action which ever accompanies a degradation of soul, and a debasement of faculties, consequent upon the dereliction of civil principles and of human virtues.

The next volume will relate the particulars.

* The debt he left upon the nation was near 800,000,000*l.*

† All his military expeditions failed *except that against Ireland.*

APPENDIX.

I.

AGGREGATE MEETING OF THE CITIZENS OF DUBLIN, Held at the Royal Exchange, on Tuesday the 3rd day of August, 1790, pursuant to adjournment.

ARCHIBALD HAMILTON ROWAN, Esq., in the chair.

The Report of the Committee appointed to draw up a state of the case of the citizens of Dublin, having been read by the chairman, which is as follows:—

That it appears that the citizens of Dublin at large, had originally the election of its magistrates, until ousted by a bye-law.

That in the reign of Charles II., when the revenues were surrendered to the Crown for ever, the power of making regulations for the different corporations was given to the lord-lieutenant and council, and certain new rules were made accordingly.

That by one of those rules the right of electing a chief magistrate for the city of Dublin, was given to the board of Aldermen, subject to the approbation of the lord-lieutenant and council.

That in the latter part of the reign of Queen Anne, the use which the lord-lieutenant and council made of this power, was an attempt to introduce disaffected men into the magistracy, and to exclude men of Whig principles, and well affected to the constitution and the present royal family, and in their place to introduce men devoted to the then administration.

That this constitution, which had not proved sufficient to secure to the magistracy proper and safe men, was the cause of great discontent among the citizens, to remedy which a Bill in the 33rd year of the late King passed into a law.

That by this Bill no man can be mayor who is rejected by the commons of the common council. That on certificate of that rejection, the board of aldermen must send down another person; and so on, from time to time, until the commons shall approve. That there is no restriction in the Act on the rejection by the commons save only that they must approve of some one aldermen.

That if the board of aldermen or the commons offend against the requisites set forth in the Act, the body offending loses, for that turn, the right of election, if the board of aldermen; and of rejection, if the commons; and the other body that has conformed to the law acquires the absolute right of choosing the lord mayor.

That notwithstanding these clauses, an opinion has been advanced by the board of aldermen and their council, which supposes that the commons cannot reject any alderman without assigning as grounds for their rejection, some corporate or legal disability.

That we have examined the Act, and can find no such clause.

That we have examined precedents, and we find that there is no precedent for any such thing; on the contrary, the precedents are against it.

That in 1763, soon after the making the Act, the commons rejected Alderman Barre, and assigned no reason.

That they rejected him a second time in the said year, and assigned no reason; and that the board of aldermen submitted, and sent down Alderman Forbes, who was approved of, and was lord mayor.

That in this year the commons, in April, rejected Alderman William James, and the board sent down another and another Alderman, without demanding reason.

That the Council act under words the same as those under which the commons proceed, save only that there are some further clauses and stronger expressions in favour of the right of the commons, and yet the Council did in the year 1711, repeatedly reject the Lord Mayor of Dublin, without assigning reasons; that they rejected in 1763, the Lord Mayor, sent up by the board on one part, and by the commons on the other, and assigned no reasons. That in the present year, they in May rejected both Alderman James and Alderman Howison, and assigned no reasons. That in June they rejected the same, and assigned no reasons; that they have now rejected Alderman Howison, and assigned no reason.

That if the commons must assign as ground for their rejection, corporate or legal incapacities in the person so rejected, the commons receive from the clause in the Act, no power or authority whatsoever.

That we cannot find the cause of this construction in the Act, and must look for it somewhere else;—that we apprehend the citizens have given offence to his Majesty's Ministers, and particularly those who at present direct the Government of this country.

That we have examined our conduct and our hearts, and we declare to God and our country, that however conscious we are of coming under the displeasure of those men, we are not conscious of having deserved it.

That we do acknowledge, that for the last ten or eleven years, the citizens of Dublin did take an active part for the liberty of their country

that in 1780, they supported to the utmost of their power, a declaration of right, which those who now principally direct the Government of this kingdom resisted, but that we do not repent the part we then acted; on the contrary, we rejoice in it, and aver, with all humility, but with truth, that if the people of Ireland in general, and the citizens of Dublin in particular, had not taken an active part on that occasion, we do conceive that the abilities and exertions of those who now principally direct our Government, and enjoy a superior degree of power and profit under tha free Constitution which they opposed, would have prevailed against the liberties of their country.

That we acknowledge, in 1785, when those very persons proposed to give back that liberty, in a scheme, consisting of twenty propositions, the citizens of Dublin did take a very decided part against said system and bore their share in the honour of defeating and confounding that wicked attempt, and though they might have given cause by that conduct to the resentment of the abettors of that project, and also to certain low and insolent expressions at that time pronounced, yet we do not repent of our conduct. We had rather suffer in common with the rest of our countrymen, under any description of abuse, however opprobrious and petulant, than under the stings of our conscience, reproaching us for supporting that most disgraceful surrender of our rights, which was proposed in said twenty propositions.

That on the late question of the Regency, the citizens of Dublin took an humble and dutiful, but a firm and constitutional part, and made their protest against those dangerous and slavish doctrines, which affected to say that the British Parliament could make a Regent for Ireland, and that his Majesty legislated in Ireland, not as King of Ireland, but as King of Great Britain, and that the great seal of England had powers in this country superior to the Imperial Crown thereof.

That in protesting against such doctrines, we conceive we only did our duty, and we now repeat our entire approbation of those principles, on which his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was called upon, by the two Houses of the Irish Parliament, to take on himself the Regency of this country, without unconstitutional and capricious restrictions; and in opposition to the above mentioned unconstitutional and arbitrary notions,—notions tending to prejudice the dignity of the Royal Family, and at the same time to deprive this country of a proud opportunity of exercising the powers of her free Constitution, and also of manifesting her affection and loyalty.

That we do also acknowledge to have expressed our approbation of the conduct of the minority of the two Houses of the late Parliament in the last session, and so far to have taken a part in condemning the attempts on the liberty of the press, and on the personal liberty of the subject, by holding him to arbitrary and illegal bail—attempts made by the Ministers of Justice, and screened from enquiry by those of the Crown;—

we also acknowledge, by that approbation, to have taken a part in condemning the late corruption and profusion practised by our Ministers, in the creation of useless offices, salaries and pensions, and likewise in the sale of peerages, in order to buy seats in the House of Commons, by selling those in the House of Lords.

That the citizens appear justified in entertaining such a conviction, viz., That those measures had no other view, meaning, or object, save corruption only. First, because said measures bespoke nothing else; secondly, because the nation was told so by the highest authority, in a threat, signifying that Members of Parliament should be made victims of their vote, which accordingly was the case; and afterwards again told by another very high authority, in a declaration, which averred, that in order to defeat an opposition in Parliament, this nation had been, in the administration of his late Excellency the Marquess of Townshend, bought by the Government, and sold by the Members of Parliament for half a million, and that if opposition continued to the present administration, this nation must be bought and sold again.

That under such authority we could not but think ourselves warranted in expressing our approbation of those who resisted such a wicked practice; for we cannot conceive a stronger challenge or summons to the people than such a declaration.

That we do acknowledge the freedom of the city of Dublin refused to his Excellency the Earl of Westmoreland, was refused because it was perceived that the measures, the men, and the principles which had disgraced his predecessor, were countenanced and continued under his Government; and in those disgraceful circumstances of his Government, it was imagined that any testimony of approbation would not have given credit or dignity to Lord Westmoreland, but would have lessened the character of the city.

That we do not deny that many among us did, on a former occasion, favour the scheme of protecting duties, but we utterly deny and disclaim having any share in approving of the outrages which followed that proposal; nor can we imagine how our approbation of laying protecting duties can, without great inconsistency, render us obnoxious to his Majesty's Ministers, seeing that the person who was the author of the attempt, and the cause of what followed it, has since received the encouraging marks of Royal favour and bounty.

But that the chief cause of the displeasure of his Majesty's Ministers seems to be our opposition to the corruption intended by an Act, entitled, An Act for the better regulating the Police of the city of Dublin. That we do solemnly declare it to be our sincere opinion, that the great object and design of the contrivers of the Police Bill was to extend, over the city of Dublin, corruption both in the corporation and among the citizens thereof; and we are authorized in entertaining such an opinion, because we know such corrupt influence to have been exercised over

both, and such a criminal and corrupt use to have been made of that bill by its contrivers and abettors; and if on the last election such attempts did not succeed, it was because the virtue of the citizens of Dublin was superior to that of those persons who had pretended to frame bills for their regulation.

That we beg leave to mention, that this bill has cost since the establishment of the Police, about 20,000*l.* a-year, and we leave it to our fellow subjects whether the protection received from said Police has been adequate to the expense thereof. We beg leave also to mention, that notwithstanding the various extravagant and criminal charges proved to have been made under colour of said bill, no one Commissioner nor divisional Justice has been discharged by Government, but has continued, they to give their votes for Government, and Government to give them every countenance and approbation, notwithstanding said scandalous expenditure of the public money.

That, however inadequate the Police Bill has been to destroy the free representation of the city, it has proved fully equal to the purpose of securing a part of the corporation to all the purposes of the Minister, and if that Minister shall succeed in destroying the right in the commons, to reject an Alderman elected Mayor by the board, in that case, the Minister (having a majority at the board) does in truth and in effect appoint the Lord Mayor for the city of Dublin.

That we do acknowledge that tests were taken and circulated, relative to said Police, that in consequence thereof, different corporations have been threatened with the loss of their franchises; their books sent for, and their freemen examined, in order to find out criminal matter to subject the corporation to the loss of franchise; so that we have reason to apprehend this attack on one particular privilege, to be but a beginning, and that there is an intention, if not speedily checked, of a more general seizure of the franchises of the city.

That we apprehend, if tests and associations against the corrupt purposes of power are punishable, that every association, and particularly those some years since entered into, the Non-consumption, and the Non-import Association; and likewise the Volunteer Association, may be held a ground for criminal prosecution; and we fear also, that every test proposed to candidates for a seat in Parliament, and every resolution touching their election or conduct, may be held illegal and criminal, nor do we know of any description of men, who have taken a part in the business of the public, that may not be included in said crime.

That it is now above one hundred years since the Charters of the subjects of Great Britain and Ireland were attacked; that we are not conscious of giving any pretence for reviving such desperate practices; that so little are we conscious of giving such a pretence, so convinced are we of our innocence, and the innocence of those tests which have been taken, that we do, with much humility, adopt and repeat them, and we accord-

ingly declare, that we approve of the conduct of the Commons of the Common Council, in withholding their approbation in favour of any Police Magistrate; and further, that in every capacity in which we shall be, we will endeavour to procure the repeal of that mischievous Act of Parliament. And further, as we conceive the corruption and violence of Ministers have not been confined to the city, but have extended to the kingdom at large, to defend the same we solemnly declare,

That we will not vote for any person who will not support a place bill, a pension bill, a bill to make his Majesty's Ministers responsible; a bill to disqualify revenue officers from voting for members to serve in Parliament; a repeal of the Police Acts; nor shall we vote for any person who does not support the redress of grievances; viz, the war charges imposed by the late Lord-lieutenant, and continued by the present; the sale of honours; arbitrary and illegal imprisonment; arbitrary and illegal demands of bail; infringement of the privileges of the commons of the city of Dublin. Finally, we declare, we will not vote for any person who does not promise that he never will assent to the misconstructions of statute the 33d of George II., whereby no person can be the Lord Mayor of Dublin, who is rejected by the Commons.

Resolved unanimously, that this meeting do most heartily concur with the report of the committee, and do submit the same to the consideration of our fellow subjects at large.

Resolved unanimously, That the warmest thanks of this meeting be presented to those respectable personages, his Grace the Duke of Leinster, the Earls of Charlemont and Moira, and other members of the Whig Club, for their manly, spirited, and constitutional support of the laws of the land, and the privileges of the citizens of Dublin; and we cannot avoid expressing our concern, that anything disrespectful should have been offered to them in the discharge of their duty to their country.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be voted to the independent jury who refused to find TRUTH a LIBEL, on the late prosecution of a printer.

Sir Edward Newenham, at the request of the meeting, having taken the chair,

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to our worthy and respectable chairman, Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Esq., for his spirited and proper conduct in the chair.

Mr. Rowan having resumed the chair.

Resolved unanimously, That the report of the committee, and the proceedings of this day, be published in the public papers, and that this meeting do now adjourn.

Signed by order,

MATT. DOWLING, Sec.

II.

REQUISITION AGREED TO AT A MEETING OF THE INDEPENDENT DUBLIN VOLUNTEERS, 17th October, 1791,

ARCHIBALD HAMILTON ROWAN in the Chair.

We, the undersigned Protestant members of the corps of Independent Dublin Volunteers, have seen with infinite regret, a publication, in which a reward is offered for the conviction of Roman Catholics found under arms in this country.

That a part of those laws which discredit our ancestors' memories, should be enforced instead of being repealed, in these enlightened days, must be a matter of astonishment; and the more so, as France, a country of Catholics, has opened its arms to the religious of all persuasions, and with that justice which is inseparable from wisdom, have declared every man to possess equally the rights of citizenship, among which, that of bearing arms is most essential.

We therefore call upon our brother Protestants of this corps, to join us in expressing an abhorrence of those statutes, under the sanction of which such publication has appeared, and to assure our Catholic brethren, that while we honour and will support the *individual and the magistrate* who distribute impartial justice, we execrate those characters who would enforce laws, which, in our opinion, disgrace the statutes of the nation.

October 11th, 1791. Signed by 21 Members.

We, the Protestant members of the Independent Dublin Volunteers, having assembled in consequence of the above Requisition, do sincerely and unanimously join in opinion with those members who have called us together, and, admiring the liberality of the sentiments contained in a proclamation of Louis XVI., King of the French, do adopt them as our own.

"LOUIS, by the grace of God, and the constitutional law of the States King of the French, to all citizens, greeting :—

"Let every idea of intolerance be abandoned for ever. Let religious opinions no longer be a source of persecution and animosity. Let all who observe the law be at liberty to adopt that form of worship to which they are attached, and let no party give offence to those who may follow opinions differing from their own, from motives of conscience."

At a Meeting of Delegates from the Protestant Members of the Associated Corps of the City of Dublin, 23d October, 1791:

It was unanimously resolved, That we perfectly concur in opinion with our brothers the Independent Dublin Volunteers, in their proceeding, of the 7th instant, respecting a late transaction, and adopt, as they do, the liberal sentiments of Louis, the King of the French; sentiments which dignify human nature, add lusture to a throne, and adorn the monarch of a free people; and while we admire the philanthropy of that great and enlightened nation, who have set an example to mankind, both

of religious and political wisdom, we cannot but lament, that distinctions injurious to both have too long disgraced the name of Irishmen; and we most fervently wish that our animosities were entombed with the bones of our ancestors; and that we, and our Roman Catholic brethren, would unite, like citizens, and CLAIM THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

JAMES NAPPER TANDY, for the Liberty Artillery, and Donore Union.
JOHN EDWARDS, P. Horse.
THOMAS BACON, Goldsmiths' Corps.
JAMES RIDDAL, Liberty Volunteers.
WILLIAM SMITH, Dub. Leg.
J. T. ASHENHURST, Dub. Rangers.

III.

PETITION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS OF IRELAND.*

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY MR. O'HARA, IN FEBRUARY, 1792.

SHEWETH,—We your petitioners, being appointed by sundry of his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion, to be agents for conducting applications to the Legislature for their relief, in our own and their names, beg leave to approach this high court of Parliament, with an unfeigned respect for its wisdom and authority; and at the same time, with a deep and heartfelt sensation of our singular and deplorable situation. And first of all we implore (and for this we throw ourselves on the indulgence of Parliament) that no irregularity or defect in form or language, should obstruct the success of these our most ardent supplications. The circumstances in which we stand deserve consideration. For near a hundred years, we and our fathers, and our grandfathers, had groaned under a code of laws, (in some parts already purged from the statutes) the like of which, no age, no nation, no climate ever saw. Yet, sore as it were from the scourge of active persecution, scarce yet confirmed in our minds, and but lately secure in our persons and in our houses from the daily alarm of search-warrants and informers, we come before Parliament for the first time; and we come to ask an alleviation of burdens, under which we can only find consolation in the melancholy comparison of former times. In this state of recent apprehension and troubled anxious hope, with minds unadapted to the precise observances of decorum, we rest upon the simple merits of our case. It is a part of our calamities, that we do not know how to tell them with

* Prepared by Mr. Burke.

propriety; and if our complaints should deviate into remonstrance, and we should seem to upbraid, when we mean to supplicate, we trust a due allowance will be made for expressions extorted by anguish, or proceeding from an inevitable ignorance of form. Excluded from the constitution in all its parts, and in many respects aliens to the law, how should we have learned the forms of Parliament.

The hardships we suffer proceed from the law. It is therefore only to the fountain of the law that we can look for relief. You are the great council of our Sovereign Lord the King; but you are also subjects like ourselves. The ear of Majesty, by the law of the land, and by the benignity of that Sovereign, whom it is your glory to imitate, is ever open to the petitions of his people. As far as we are able to discern the great outlines of a constitution, which we know only in speculation, we conceive that it is the boast of the constitution of these kingdoms, to have associated a portion of the people into the Sovereign power; in order that, not dazzled with the awe of Supreme Majesty, the subject may find a happy mediatorial institution, an asylum wherein to deposit the burden of his griefs, to expose the nakedness of his oppressions, and indulge complaint even to exaggeration. There were, indeed, those who would have made us believe, that Parliament was only to be approached with circumspect and timid steps; at most, in general terms; and that wrapped in proud inexorable state, you would consider a specification of the wants of the people, as an insult and a reason for not supplying them. But we knew it could not be. We knew that no senate, no king, no tyrant had ever professed to turn his ear from detailed supplication. The majesty of God himself is willing to receive, and demands the incense of particular prayer. And shall we, who speak from man to man, from subject to subject, not dare to specify the measure and extent of our crying necessities. Despising that base and hypocritical affectation, we are sure it is far more congenial to the nature and to the temper of Parliament, with a firm and generous confidence to say, as we say—here is the evil—there is the remedy: to you we look for relief.

Behold us then before you, three millions of the people of Ireland, subjects of the same King, inhabitants of the same land, bound together by the same social contract, contributing to the same revenues, defended by the same armies, declared by the authentic words of an Act of Parliament, to be good and loyal subjects to his Majesty, his crown and government; and yet doomed to one general unqualified incapacity; a universal exclusion, a universal civil proscription. We are excluded from the state, we are excluded from the revenues. We are excluded from every distinction, every privilege, every office, every emolu-

ment, every civil trust, every corporate right. We are excluded from the navy, from the army, from the magistrature, from the professions. We are excluded from the palladium of life, liberty, and property, the juries and inquests of our country.—From what are we not excluded? We are excluded from the constitution. We stand a strange anomaly in the law; not acknowledged, not disavowed; not slaves, not freemen; an exception to the principles of jurisprudence; a prodigy in the system of civil institution. We incur no small part of the penalties of a general outlawry, and a general excommunication. Disability meets us at every hour, and in every walk of life. It cramps our industry, it shackles our property, it depresses our genius, it debilitates our minds. Why are we disfranchised, and why are we degraded? Or rather, why do these evils afflict our country, of which we are no inconsiderable part?

We most humbly and earnestly supplicate and implore Parliament, to call this law of universal exclusion to a severe account, and now at last to demand of it, upon what principle it stands, of equity, of morality, of justice, or of policy. And while we request this scrutiny into the law, we demand also the severest scrutiny into our principles, our actions, our words, and our thoughts. Wherein have we failed as loyal and affectionate subjects to the best of Sovereigns, or as sober, peaceable, and useful members of society? Where is that people who can offer the testimony of a hundred years' patient submission to a code of laws, of which no man living is now an advocate—without sedition, without murmur, without complaint? Our loyalty has undergone a century of severe persecution, for the sake of our religion, and we come out of the ordeal, with our religion, and with our loyalty.

Why then are we still left under the ban of our country? We differ, it is true, from the national church in some points of doctrinal faith. Whether it is our blessing or our misfortune, HE only knows to whom all things are known. For this our religion we offer no apology. After ages of learned and critical discussion, we cannot expect to throw farther light upon it. We have only to say, that it is founded on revelation as well as the religion established by law. Both you and we are regenerated in the same baptism, and profess our belief in the same Christ; you according to the Church of England, we according to the Church of Rome. We do not exercise an abject or obscure superstition. If we err, our errors have been, and still are, sanctioned by the example of many flourishing, learned, and civilized nations. We do not enter, we disdain to enter into the cavils of antiquated sophistry, and to insult the understanding of Parliament, by supposing it necessary to prove, that a religion is not incompatible with civil government, which

has subsisted for so many hundred years under every possible form of government, in some tolerated, in some established, even to this day.

With regard to our civil principles, we are unalterably, deeply, and zealously attached to his Majesty's person and Government. Good and loyal subjects we are, and we are declared by law to be. With regard to the constitution of the state, we are as much attached to it as it is possible for men to be attached to a constitution by which they are not avowed. With regard to the constitution of the Church we are, indeed, inviolably attached to our own: First, because we believe it to be true; and next, because beyond belief, we know that its principles are calculated to make us, and have made us good men and good citizens. But as we find it answers to us individually all the useful ends of religion, we solemnly and conscientiously declare, that we are satisfied with the present condition of our ecclesiastical policy. With satisfaction we acquiesce in the establishment of the national church; we neither repine at its possessions, nor envy its dignities; we are ready, upon this point, to give every assurance that is binding upon man.

With regard to every other subject, and to every other calumny, we have no disavowal, we have no declarations to make: conscious of the innocence of our lives, and the purity of our intentions, we are justified in asking what reason of state exists, and we deny that any does exist, for leaving us still in the bondage of the law, and under the protracted restriction of penal statutes? Penalties suppose, if not crimes, at least a cause of reasonable suspicion. Criminal imputations like those, (for to be adequate to the effect, they must be great indeed) are to a generous mind, more grievous than the penalties themselves. They incontrovertibly imply, that we are considered by the legislature as standing in a doubtful light of fidelity or loyalty to the King, or to the constitution of our country, and perhaps to both. While on these unjust suspicions we are deprived of the common rights and privileges of British and of Irish subjects, it is impossible for us to say we are contented while we endure a relentless civil proscription, for which no cause is alleged, and for which no reason can be assigned.

Because we now come with a clear, open, and manly voice, to insist upon the grievances under which we still labour, it is not to be inferred, that we have forgot the benignant justice of Parliament, which has relieved us from the more oppressive, but not the most extensive part of the penal system. In those days of affliction, when we lay prostrate under the iron rod, and as it were, intranced in a gulf of persecution, it was necessary for Parliament to go the whole way, and to stretch out a saving hand to relieve us. We had not the courage to look up with

hope, to know our condition, or even to conceive a remedy. It is because the former relaxations were not thrown away upon us; it is because we begin to feel the influence of somewhat more equal laws, and to revive from our former inanition, that we now presume to stand erect before you: conceiving that Parliament has a right to expect, as a test of our gratitude, that we should no longer lie a dead weight upon our country, but come forward in our turn to assist with our voice, our exertions, and our councils, in a work, to which the wisdom and power of Parliament is incompetent without our co-operation—the application of a policy, wholly new, to the pressing wants, and to the intimate necessities of a people long forgotten, out of the sight and out of the knowledge of a superintending legislature. Accordingly we are come, and we claim no small merit that we have found our way to the door of Parliament. It has not been made easy for us. Every art and industry has been exerted to obstruct us: attempts have been made to divide us into factions, and to throw us into confusion. We have stood firm and united. We have received hints and cautions; obscure intimations and public warnings to guard our supplications against intimidation. We have resisted that species of disguised and artful threat. We have been traduced, calumniated, and libelled. We have witnessed sinister endeavours again to blow the flame of religious animosity, and awake the slumbering spirit of popular terror and popular fury. But we have remained unmoved. We are, indeed, accustomed to this tumid agitation and ferment in the public mind. In former times it was the constant precursor of more intense persecution, but it has also attended every later and happy return of legislative mercy. But whether it betokens us evil or good, to Parliament we come, to seek, at that shrine, a safeguard from impending danger, or a communication of new benefits.

What then do we ask of Parliament? To be thoroughly united and made one with the rest of our fellow subjects! That, alas! would be our first, our dearest wish. But if that is denied us, if sacrifices are to be made, if by an example of rare moderation, we do not aspire to the condition of a fair equality, we are not at a loss to find in the range of social benefits (which is nearly that of our present exclusion) an object which is, and ought to be the scope and resting place of our wishes and our hopes,—that which if we do not ask, we are not worthy to obtain. We knock that it may be opened unto us. We have learned by tradition from our ancestors, we have heard by fame in foreign lands, where we have been driven to seek education in youth, and bread in manhood, and by the contemplation of our own minds, we are filled with a deep and unalterable opinion, that the Irish, formed upon the model of the British constitu-

tion, is a blessing of inestimable value: that it contributes, and is even essentially necessary for national and individual happiness. Of this constitution, we feel ourselves worthy; and though not practically, we know the benefits of its franchises. Nor can we without a criminal dissimulation conceal from Parliament the painful inquietude which is felt by our whole persuasion, and the dangers to which we do not cease to be exposed, by this our total and unmerited exclusion from the common rights, privileges, and franchises conceded by our Kings for the protection of the subject. This exclusion is indeed the root of every evil. It is that which makes property insecure, and industry precarious. It pollutes the stream of justice. It is the cause of daily humiliation. It is the insurmountable barrier, the impassable line of separation which divides the nation, and which keeping animosity alive, prevents the entire and cordial intermixture of the people. And therefore inevitably it is, that some share, some portion, some participation in the liberties and franchises of our country, becomes the primary and essential object of our ardent and common solicitation. It is a blessing for which there is no price, and can be no compensation. With it, every evil is tolerable; without it, no advantage is desirable. In this, as in all things, we submit ourselves to the paramount authority of Parliament; and we shall acquiesce in what is given, as we do in what is taken away. But this is the boon we ask. We hunger, and we thirst for the constitution of our country. If it shall be deemed otherwise, and shall be determined that we are qualified perhaps for the base and lucrative tenures of professional occupation, but unworthy to perform the free and noble services of the constitution, we submit, indeed, but we solemnly protest against that distinction for ourselves and for our children. It is no act of ours. Whatever judgment may await our merits or our failings, we cannot conclude ourselves, by recognizing, for a consideration, the principle of servility and perpetual degradation.

These are the sentiments which we feel to the bottom of our hearts, and we disclose them to the free Parliament of a Monarch, whose glory it is to reign over a free people. To you we commit our supplications and our cause. We have, indeed, little to apprehend in this benigner age, from the malignant aspersions of former times, and not from the obsolete calumnies of controversial strife; although we see them endeavouring again to collect the remnant of their exhausted venom, before they die for ever, in a last and feeble effort to traduce our religion and our principles. But, as oppression is ever fertile in pretexts, we find other objections started against us more dangerous, because they are new, or new at least in the novelty of a shameless avowal. They are principally three;—first, it is con-

tended, that we are a people originally and fundamentally different from yourselves, and that our interests are for ever irreconcileable, because some hundred years ago our ancestors were conquered by yours. We deny the conclusion; we deny the fact; it is false. In addressing ourselves to you, we speak to the children of our ancestors, as we also are the children of your forefathers; nature has triumphed over law; we are now mixed in blood; we are blended in connexion; we all are Irishmen. * * * We desire to partake in the constitution, and therefore we do not desire to destroy it. Parliament is now in possession of our case—our grievances—our sorrows—our obstructions—our solicitudes—our hopes. We have told you the desire of our hearts. We do not ask to be relieved from this or that incapacity; not the abolition of this or that odious distinction; not even, perhaps, to be, in the fullness of time, and in the accomplishment of the great comprehensive scheme of Legislation, finally incorporated with you in the enjoyment of the same constitution. Even beyond that mark, we have an ultimate, and if possible an object of more intense desire. We look for an union of affections; a gradual, and, therefore, a total obliteration of all the animosities, (on our part they are long extinct) and all the prejudices which have kept us disjoined. We come to you, a great accession to the Protestant interest, with hearts and minds suitable to such an end. We do not come as jealous and suspicious rivals, to gavel the constitution, but with fraternal minds to participate in the great incorporate inheritance of freedom, to be held according to the laws and customs of the realm, and by our immediate fealty and allegiance to the King. And so may you receive us,

And we shall ever pray.

IV.

September, 13*th*, 1792.

AT A MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE CATHOLICS,

RANDAL M'DONNELL, Esq. in the Chair,

The Sub-commiteee having seen, with great concern, a variety of publications, censuring the Circular Letter lately issued by them, said to be signed Edward Byrne, and erroneously stated to be illegal and unconstitutional, have thought it their duty to submit that letter to the inspection of the Hon. Simon Butler, and Beresford Burston, Esq., two gentlemen of the first eminence in the profession, and who have the honour to be of his Majesty's council.

The case and opinions of those Gentlemen, which follow, will

demonstrate, that the Committee have taken no step whatever, which the laws and Constitution do not fully warrant.

CASE.

The Catholics of Ireland, labouring under laws by which they are deprived of every share in the legislature, rendered incapable of serving their country in any office, civil or military, and deprived of an equal participation with their fellow subjects of other persuasions, in the benefit of the trial by jury, are desirous of laying their grievances before the King and Parliament, and supplicating redress.

As the most effectual method of collecting the sense of the Catholic body, and laying it before the King and Parliament, a General Committee from that body was formed, for the purpose of making application to the Legislature, from time to time, on the subject of their grievances, and praying that redress, to which their loyalty and attachment to their Sovereign and obedience to the laws justly entitled them.

In the last session of Parliament the General Committee, as individuals, did, on behalf of themselves and their brethren, present a petition to Parliament, praying relief, which petition was, with circumstances of unprecedented severity, rejected, and as one of the many causes of said rejection, it was alleged that the persons whose names were affixed to said petition were a faction, unconnected with and incompetent to speak the sense of the Catholics of Ireland. In order to obviate every such objection in future, the General Committee framed a plan, which is sent herewith, for the purpose of procuring the attendance of such persons from each county as were best acquainted with the sentiments, and could best declare the voice of the Catholics of Ireland, who should be by them deputed as delegates to the General Committee, with instructions to support in the said Committee, as the voice of the Catholics, by whom they were deputed, "That an humble representation be made to their gracious Sovereign, and to Parliament, of the many severe laws which oppress his Majesty's faithful subjects, the Catholics of Ireland, although no cause, founded in wisdom or policy, is assigned for their continuance, imploring it as essential to their protection, and to secure an impartial distribution of justice in their favour, that they may be restored to the elective franchise, and an equal participation in the benefits of the trial by jury."

Charges and insinuations of a very heavy nature have been thrown out and menaces used by many bodies of men and individuals, to prevent the carrying the above plan into execution, under a pretence that it is contrary to law, and that the meeting projected therein would be a Popish Congress, formed for the purpose of overawing the Legislature.

The General Committee, abhorring and utterly renouncing

such imputation, and desiring to regulate their conduct in strict conformity to law, request your opinion upon the following queries:—

1. Have his Majesty's subjects of Ireland, professing the Roman Catholic religion, a right to petition his Majesty and the Legislature for the redress of grievances, equally with Protestants; and if not, wherein do they differ?

2. If they have this right, may they lawfully choose delegates for the purpose of framing such petition and presenting the same, in a peaceable and respectful manner; and if they may not, by what law or statute are they forbidden to do so?

3. Is a meeting for the purpose of choosing such delegates, an unlawful assembly; and if not an unlawful assembly, has any magistrate or other person, by or under pretence of the Riot Act, or any other, and what statute, a right to disperse the said meeting?

4. What is the legal mode of presenting petitions to the Legislature in Ireland; and is there any and what statute upon that point in this country?

5. Is the plan sent herewith agreeable to law; if not, wherein is it contrary thereto, and to what penalties would persons become subject, who should carry, or attempt to carry the same into effect?

Counsel will please to state the authorities upon which he grounds his opinion.

ANSWER TO THE FIRST QUESTION.

I am clearly and decidedly of opinion, that all and every his Majesty's subjects of this kingdom, of every persuasion, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant, have an unalienable right to petition, in a peaceable manner, the King or either House of Parliament, for redress of grievances, be those grievances real or imaginary.—1st Blacks. Comm. 143.

ANSWER TO THE SECOND QUESTION.

I am clearly and decidedly of opinion, that Roman Catholics have, equally with Protestants, a right to choose delegates for the purpose of framing such petition, and presenting the same in a peaceable and respectful manner to the Legislature, and that they are not forbidden so to do by any law or statute whatsoever.—Delegation has always been considered not only as the most effectual mode of obtaining the general sense, but also as the best security against tumult and disturbance.

ANSWER TO THE THIRD QUESTION.

I am also clearly and decidedly of opinion, that a peaceable meeting for the purpose of choosing such delegates, is a lawful assembly, and that no magistrate or other person, by or under

pretence of the Riot Act or any other statute, has a right to disperse such meeting. The assembly which may be dispersed under authority of the Riot Act, must be unlawful, riotous, tumultuous, and in disturbance of the public peace. The Act is inoperative upon an assembly that is lawful—and I feel no difficulty in declaring my opinion, that an obstruction of the peaceable exercise of an unalienable right of the subject is a misdemeanor of the greatest magnitude, and that any person charged with the guilt thereof, be his rank or station what it may, is indictable, and, if found guilty by his country, liable to be fined and imprisoned; and I also feel no difficulty in declaring my opinion, that publications charging the General Committee with exciting, in the instance before us, unlawful assemblies for seditious purposes are libels, and as such are indictable and actionable.

ANSWER TO THE FOURTH QUESTION.

By the English statute of the 1st William and Mary, st. 2. ch. 2., commonly called the Bill of Rights, and which being a law declaratory of the rights of the subject, is therefore of force in Ireland, it is declared "that all subjects have a right to petition the king, and that all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal." Notwithstanding the Bill of Rights is general, and does not specify any regulations or restrictions, yet the Court of King's Bench in England, in the case of the King against Lord George Gordon, (Douglas 571,) thought proper to deliver an opinion, that it did not repeal the English Act of the 13th Car. 2. st. 1. ch. 5., which enacted, "that no petition to the King, or either House of Parliament, for any alteration in church or state, shall be signed by above twenty persons, unless the matter thereof be approved by three justices of the peace, or the major part of the grand jury, in the country; and in London, by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council: nor shall any petition be presented by more than ten persons at a time." Under the above authority, therefore, the right of petitioning in England is subject to the regulations and restrictions laid upon it by that act of Charles II. But as neither the act of Charles, nor any one similar to it, is in force in Ireland, the right of the Irish subjects to petition their legislature is not subject to any regulation or restriction whatsoever, save only that due care must be taken, lest, under the pretence of petitioning, the subject be guilty of any riot or tumult. I am therefore of opinion, that no particular mode of presenting petitions to the legislature of Ireland is pointed out by any law or statute of force in this kingdom. It is to be observed, that in the last session of Parliament, a great concourse of people assembled in the Park, framed a petition, and deputed a very

large number of their body to present it to the House of Lords; the Lord Chancellor, in observing upon the petition, did not charge the petitioners with any illegality, either in assembling to frame, or in presenting the petition, but on the contrary, his lordship was pleased to commend them for the peaceable manner in which they deported themselves. The success which attended the petition, is in the recollection of most people.

ANSWER TO THE FIFTH QUESTION.

I am also clearly and decidedly of opinion, that the plan is in every respect agreeable to law, and that persons peaceably carrying, or attempting to carry the same into effect, would not thereby incur any penalty whatsoever. The plan is, indeed, unexceptionable; while it serves effectually to obtain the general sense of the great Catholic body of Ireland, it provides every precaution against tumult and disturbance.

SIMON BUTLER.

Sept. 3, 1792.

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1. His Majesty's subjects of Ireland professing the Roman Catholic religion, have, in my opinion, a right to petition his Majesty, and the two Houses of Parliament, or any of them, for the redress of grievances equally with Protestants.

2. As they have this right, it follows, as I conceive, that, where the grievance complained of affects the whole body, they have also a right to collect the sense of every individual of that body; but as the assembling them all for that purpose would be inconvenient, imprudent, and, perhaps, dangerous, I think the sense of the whole may be collected from a smaller number delegated by them for that purpose, who may frame and present such petition; and I know of no principle of the common law, nor of any statute, by which they are forbidden to do so,—it being always supposed that these proceedings are carried on in a peaceable and respectful manner.

3. I do not apprehend that a number of Roman Catholics meeting in a private, peaceable, and quiet manner, for the sole purpose of declaring their sense of the alleged grievances, and their desire of petitioning the legislature for redress, and of choosing out of themselves, one or more to assist in framing and presenting such petition, can be considered as an unlawful assembly; and I do not think that any magistrate, or other person, by, or under pretence of, the Riot Act, or any other act that I am acquainted with, would have a right to disperse such meeting.

4. I do not know of any statute in this kingdom which regulates the mode of presenting petitions to the Legislature of this

kingdom. The English statute of the 13 Car. 2. st. 1. ch. 5. has not been enacted here, that I know of; but the general law of the land requires that the petition should be presented in the most respectful and peaceable manner. The intended petition, as I apprehend, should be entitled, the petition of his Majesty's subjects of Ireland professing the Roman Catholic religion, and should be signed by a few of the Roman Catholics of each county and principal city in Ireland, on behalf of themselves and their Roman Catholic brethren of that county or city. According to the forms of Parliament here, the petition must be presented to each House by a Member of that House; in presenting the petition to his Majesty, which may be either to himself in person, or through the medium of the Lord-lieutenant, it would I think, be prudent to follow the directions of the English statute above-mentioned, and that not more than ten persons should present it.

5. From what I have already said, I must be of opinion that the plan sent herewith to me is not contrary to law; and I cannot conceive that persons carrying, or attempting to carry it into effect peaceably and quietly, would become subject to any penalties.

I have grounded my opinion upon the conception I have formed of the law and constitution of this kingdom, from that general research which my profession has led me to make into their principles; I have not, therefore, any authorities to state.

BERESFORD BURSTON.

13th September, 1792.

V.

AT A MEETING OF THE CATHOLIC INHABITANTS OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN, duly convended by Public Summons, Wednesday October 31, 1792.

THOMAS BRAUGHALL in the Chair.

A copy of the letter of the Corporation of the City of Dublin, dated September 11, 1792, and addressed to the Protestants of Ireland, having been read from a public print, a Committee, consisting of the following gentlemen, viz. :—

Randall M'Donnell,	Thomas Ryan,
John Keogh,	Thomas Warren,
Hugh Hamill,	Charles Ryan,
Edward Byrne,	John Ball,

was ordered to prepare an answer to said publication, and to

report the same forthwith: and the Committee so appointed having reported accordingly:

RESOLVED,

That the declaration which follows be published as the unanimous act of this meeting.

That we embrace this opportunity to repeat our thanks to the illustrious characters in both Houses of Parliament who have nobly stood forward in support of Catholic Emancipation, and the right of the subject to petition for redress of grievances.

That our warmest gratitude is due, and hereby respectfully offered to our countrymen, the citizens of Belfast, for the uniform and manly exertions which they have on all occasions made in support of our cause, and for the example of liberality and genuine public spirit which they have thereby shewn to the kingdom at large.

That our sincere thanks are likewise due to the different Volunteer Corps lately reviewed in Ulster, to the Societies of United Irishmen of Dublin and Belfast, to the Protestant freeholders of Cork, the different gentlemen who at grand juries and county meetings have supported our cause, and to all others among our Protestant brethren who have manifested a wish for our emancipation; and we trust we shall evince by our conduct, that we are not insensible nor unworthy of the kindness which they have shewn us.

That our Chairman be ordered to transmit copies of this day's proceedings to the Chairman of the town-meeting of Belfast, the Chairmen of the different Societies of United Irishmen, the different reviewing officers in Ulster, and the other distinguished characters who have interested themselves in the cause of Catholic Emancipation.

By order of the Meeting,

SIMON M'GUIRE, Secretary.

DECLARATION.

We, the Catholics of the City of Dublin, have read with extreme concern, the resolutions of different bodies of our Protestant fellow-subjects, in which they express their disapprobation of the conduct of our Committee, and their aversion to our claims of the elective franchise, and an equal participation in the benefit of the trial by jury. But the address of the corporation of this city to the Protestants of Ireland, has filled us most peculiarly with mortification and surprise; as Irishmen, we are astonished and grieved, that the first corporation of this kingdom should have put forth a publication teeming with false principles of government, and false statements of

historic facts; as Catholics, we lament that the same body should have misconceived and misstated our conduct and our objects.

We have read of what is called the right of conquest; it has also been called the right of robbery: but we did not imagine that a doctrine so subversive of the peace and settlement of society, and of the immutable rules of justice,—that a doctrine, which in its consequences so completely warrants, and in its language so wantonly provokes resistance, would be made the foundation of the Protestant claims to the government of this country. We did not expect that a doctrine exploded in this island by the Revolution of 1782, would be revived to our oppression. If conquest and the right of the sword could justify the stronger in retaining dominion, why did Great Britain abdicate her legislative supremacy over Ireland, or why were we all, Protestants and Catholics, actuated as one man to resist so legitimate an authority? Is that monstrous and exploded principle still to be retained for our peculiar subjection, which was felt to be false by every honest man, when applied to the subjection of his native land?

We are desired in that address to "rest contented with the most perfect toleration of our religion, the fullest security of our property, and the most complete personal liberty." They are great and important blessings, but they are not secure to any man who is a slave. They are held but by sufferance, by those who are tried without their consent, and legislated for without being represented.

We agree with the corporation in the spirit of one assertion, they "know of no power under Heaven authorized to alienate this their most valuable inheritance." Let our claims be tried by the same principle. The Catholics were the constituents of the very Parliament which deprived them of their franchise, and thereby did indeed "alienate their most valuable inheritance;" and though we have acquiesced under that unjust deprivation for sixty-five years, and though we will continue to acquiesce, so long as the statute stands in its present form, we must still declare, as a political truth, that no elected and delegated Legislature has a right to disfranchise its electors and delegators, who never entrusted their power to that body for the purpose of being made the instrument of its own destruction.—And we further say, that in our judgment, not even those electors could empower their representatives to enslave us, their posterity.

We are likewise told by the corporation, that "experience has taught them, that without the ruin of the Protestant establishment, the Catholic cannot be allowed the smallest influence in the State." The inclinations of our body are not to subvert

any establishment in this country; if they were, we are not competent to so absurd a project; and no strength that we might derive from the restoration of our rights would enable us to effect it, while the King, the House of Lords, the Irish Privy Council, the English Privy Council, and the Chancellors of both countries, are unalterably Protestant. If by establishment be meant religious establishment, we must further reply, that no experience has taught them so; the Protestant religion was dominant in this country long before our ancestors lost their elective franchise. Is it only since the year 1727 that Protestantism has been the religion of the State in Ireland? If by establishment be meant the government of the country, it is equally ill-founded; *that* is instituted for the freedom and happiness of the governed; and yet this address would imply, that procuring freedom and happiness for three-fourths of this kingdom would cause the utter ruin of our government. A greater libel against the constitution of Ireland was never uttered by its most declared enemy. It is sufficiently capacious to give liberty to every man; and the more its base is widened and its blessings diffused, the more will it be fortified against the efforts of time and despotism. Nor does experience warrant the assertion. Our loss of the right of citizenship is comparatively modern; and the government of this country neither required nor gained any accession of strength by our slavery. That was effected in a time of profound tranquillity, after the uninterrupted loyalty and peaceable demeanour of our ancestors had been experienced and acknowledged for thirty-six years from the capitulation of Limerick. The causes that induced this law are now almost forgotten; but if tradition is to be believed, where history is silent, it was enacted to satisfy Court intrigue, not public security; to change the balance of power between Protestant families in two or three counties of this kingdom, not to give any increase of power to the Protestants at large.

It is suggested in that address, that the Revolution was established in Ireland by force, or as it is profanely called, by "an appeal to Heaven." The Revolution in England derived all its glory and its stability from this great truth — that it was effected by the people's will. Does the Revolution in Ireland stand on a different foundation? Is it supported by a principle directly the reverse of that which rendered the Revolution in England the admiration of the world? No; it is not so; we will not concur in calumniating that great event, that our ancestors may also be calumniated. The revolution in Ireland was not completed by the battles of the Boyne or Aughrim; but by the articles of Limerick. It was consented to by all, Protestants and Catholics. The consent of the Catholics was

obtained by a compact as solemnly ratified, and as speedily broken, as any in the records of history. By that compact, the enjoyment of all their rights was stipulated for to our ancestors as the consideration of their consent. The restoration of those rights is therefore connected with the revolution-settlement of this kingdom.

We are also told that these laws were enacted to "deprive the Roman Catholics of political power, in consequence of the many and great efforts made by them in support of their Popish King and French connections." When, where, or how, were those many and great efforts made? From their number and their magnitude, those who so confidently advance this assertion, cannot, we presume, be at a loss for an instance; but we defy the malice of invention to produce one. Our forefathers never violated the Articles of Limerick. From the time that they consented to the Revolution in 1691, they never made any efforts either in support of a Popish king, or French connexions, or of any other enemy to King William and his successor—had they even done so, the fault had been theirs—why not the punishment theirs also? Or, is it intended to be insinuated to fellow-subjects, who know our loyalty, that we are anxious to have this country "governed by an arbitrary and unconstitutional Popish tyrant, and dependant upon France," or that we do not desire to "enjoy the blessings of a free Protestant Government, a Protestant monarch limited by the Constitution (as settled by the Revolution) and an intimate connexion with the free empire of Britain?" If we do, why is the law continued, after the reason of enacting has ceased?

We admit that from the moment the Protestant began to make concessions, the Roman Catholic began to extend his claims. The first kindness of our Protestant brethren shewed a returning spirit of liberality and affection. Before that time we were not so rash as to raise our minds to the hope of citizenship. But we were never guilty of the deceit imputed to us, of declaring that a little would satisfy us, and when that little was granted, of claiming more. Our own attention, as well as that of our Protestant fellow-subjects, was directed to the most immediate and most practicable redress. We did not embarrass the measure by remote and extraneous considerations, but we never did either in word or thought, and we never will, forego our hopes of emancipation. Freemen would not believe us, if we said that we should be induced by any comparatively small alleviation of our grievances, to consent to perpetual slavery.

We lament that it is not true, "that the last session of Parliament left us in no wise different from our Protestant fellow-subjects, save only in the exercise of political power." That assertion is falsified by the heavy code of penal laws still in

force against us, many of which infringe on that security of property and that personal liberty, which it is alleged we possess. But it is not power, it is protection we solicit. It is not power, including in it the notion of superiority—it is the equal enjoyment of our rights that we claim.

The Corporation tell us that they will not be compelled by any authority whatever, "to abandon that political situation which their forefathers won with their swords, and which they have resolved with their lives and fortunes to maintain." Are we the seditious men that would overawe the Legislature and our fellow-countrymen? No; our views are peaceable, and neither insult nor oppression shall make us forget our loyalty. But wherefore this untimely threat? It wears the appearance of first urging us to depair by an eternal proscription, and then of throwing down the gauntlet of civil war. We too have lives and fortunes, which we are ready to devote to the service of our country, whenever real danger shall require it; but we will never degrade that last and most solemn act of patriotism into an idle menace and an insolent bravado.

The great question of our emancipation is now afloat, we have never fought to acquire it by force, and we hope for it now only from the wisdom of the Legislature, and affection of our Protestant brethren. But we here solemnly and publicly declare, that we never will, through any change of time or circumstance, save the actual restoration of our rights, desist from the peaceable and lawful pursuit of the two great objects of our hopes—the right of elective franchise, and an equal share in the benefits of the Trial by Jury.

VI.

STATE PRISONERS sent to Fort George by order of George the Third, in violation of the agreement made by them and others with the Marquess of Cornwallis.

Samuel Neilson	T. Cuthbert	George Cuming
Thomas Russell	Roger O'Connor	William Dowdall
A. O'Connor	John Swing	Robert Hunter
T. A. Emmett	Hugh Wilson	Robert Simms
W. J. M'Nevin*	Jos. Chambers	J. Tennent
Nat. Dowling*	J. Cormick	Stute Dickson
J. Sweetman*	Edward Hudson	

* Those so marked only were Roman Catholics.

London: Printed by STEWART and MURRAY, Old Bailey.

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